TELOS

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Special Issue on Religion and Politics

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VAN DÜLMEN: *History of Religion as Social Science*
GERSHENZON: *The Destinies of the Jewish People (1922)*
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INTRODUCTION

Over the last decade, religion has had a surprisingly powerful political impact, but the relation between religion and politics remains confused and unexamined. Conventional wisdom still holds on to the discredited notion that religion is primarily a premodern residue doomed to fade away along with other superstitions and myths. But how can this residue thesis be seriously argued today when almost every major political conflict exhibits extensive religious underpinnings? Any cursory list of current hot spots on the world map points to religion as a decisive feature in case after case: Moslem fundamentalism in Iran; Catholic nationalism in Poland; liberation theology in Latin America; the Jewish and Palestinian questions in the Middle East; the Catholic-Protestant clash in Northern Ireland; the Moslem-Hindu conflict in India. Revolutions come and go, but after the dust settles one can usually find the church or its denominational equivalent dealing with the ruins and concretely seeking to alleviate human despair and fear. It is not helpful to reduce, as the dogmatic Left does, all of these conflicts to special cases of the labor-capital confrontation or simple anti-imperialist struggles. Like cheap mustard that serves mainly to conceal or annihilate the true flavor of the food, the economistic account streamlines history by destroying its specificity and real meaning. In forcibly redefining every conflict as part of that triumphant march (really more a funeral procession) toward the inevitable communist society, the dogmatic Left sinks into mystification. Life goes on, even if this Left may not. Religion stubbornly refuses to sink away quietly into that dustbin of history that has recently been regarded as its proper resting place.

A re-evaluation of religion and its political role, however, is no easy task. Religion and politics are not commensurable. Furthermore, religion as a subjective, pre-rational and pre-political dimension must not be confused with any of its objectified institutional manifestations. The former is one — if not *the* — essential part of being human and usually translates first into morality and only later into politics. As pre-categorical and pre-rational, it escapes whatever determination we may try to force on it with definitions or descriptions of its proper role. It refers to the lived experience in the first person, the experience of the subject constituting and constituted by that social world of which we are all an inextricable part. But collective social expressions of this "oceanic feeling," to use Freud's term, objectify religion into institutional forms. Even though these forms sometimes play emancipatory roles, they necessarily freeze in time the particular moment of their institutionalization and tend to reproduce unchanged the social relations predominant at the time of their origin — regardless of any later historical developments. Consequently, in a very crucial structural sense, institutionalized religion is always conservative. But in the age of one-dimensionality brought about by the universalization of the commodity form, this conservatism may even play an emancipatory role *as* conservatism, to the extent that it provides some shelter against the prevailing winds of homogenization that threaten to obliterate otherness. Thus, both in its subjective form as the primordial expression of humanity and its objectified and institutionalized manifestations, religion can perform an emancipatory political role.

Given this, it is useful to re-examine the stand toward religion taken by Marx and the critical theorists. Contrary to popular belief, advocated both by theologians and official Marxist-Leninist ideologues, Marx was *not* an atheist. As Parinetto shows through a careful examination of Marx's texts, atheism is negatively but inextricably connected with objectified, institutionalized theism, and thus is embroiled in the same "opium of the people" whose historical function has been to idolatrously objectify the religious dimension into determinate institutional forms — a particularization which rationalizes and at the same time destroys that which must remain unprocessed and unstruc-

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tured to retain its integrity. This "post-atheism" which in Marx appears as a project of emancipation — also negatively expressed as the abolition of all that prevents people from being fully human — finds resonance in Adorno's negative dialectic. As Siebert shows, critical theory was throughout deeply committed to a non-mystificatory negative religious vision manifesting itself as the longing for emancipation. This is why, for Adorno, politics without theology remains "mere business."

Thus, we see in the best exponents of Marxian and neo-Marxian thought a hidden — or, better, repressed — and constant concern to distinguish between the spirit and the institution of religion. Such a distinction provides the starting point for a rapprochement between the non-dogmatic Marxian tradition — especially its more outspoken anti-Leninist branches — and a critical theology itself seeking to salvage the religious spirit at the cost of constantly clashing with its institutional objectifications. Far from resurrecting the old and stale Christian-Marxist dialogue involving East European party bureaucrats and Vatican officials who are concerned primarily with negotiating an ideological armistice meant to secure clear and mutually agreeable territorial boundaries within a context of political collaboration, this type of rapprochement would involve an unconditional re-examination of the meaning and function of religion, emancipation, justice, etc. In this spirit, van Dülmen proposes a new approach to the history of religion that would locate particular religious institutions as well as their shifting social functions in various socio-historical contexts. More studies of this type will go a long way toward developing the problem of the relation between the religious spirit and its various institutional expressions.

Besides rationalizing and bureaucratizing the religious feeling, institutionalized religions have always found it difficult to refrain from undertaking a political objectification to effectively enforce their codified morality. Even in the U.S. and other Western democracies where there is a sharp separation of church and state, this is partly due to the fact that the Protestant ethos, in seeking to safeguard its pluralism and autonomy, has objectified itself thus institutionalizing the concerns predominant at the time of its emergence. Clearly, such an a-historical universalization process implicit in these political translations has far-reaching historical consequences. The Jewish case is typical. The 19th-century Zionism that resulted from centuries of persecution of Jews could not escape this fate. It could not avoid amalgamating traditional Jewish values with extraneous socio-political concerns typical of its broader cultural context. As Mikhail O. Gershenzon describes it in a 1922 text that, notwithstanding its age, has lost none of its brilliance, relevance and problematic character, Zionism came to absorb many central-European cultural fads — positivism, nationalism, etc. — which threatened the very nature of Jewish religion. In this provocative essay, Gershenzon forcefully rejects the idea of a Jewish state as one that contradicts his notion of what it means to be a Jew in the first place. Accordingly, a Jewish state would destroy Jewishness more effectively than any pogrom. Surprisingly, Simone Weil, born to a French Jewish family, seems unknowingly to have taken Gershenzon's ascetic theology to heart, by repudiating official Judaism and all other earthly ties. While granting that Weil developed an impressive critique of Stalinism and the bureaucratic West, Jean Elshtain argues that the gnostic theology behind that critique is too dessicated to either sustain individual lives or give birth to promising political movements. Be that as it may, whether Gershenzon's vision of the wandering Jew is valid — and Robert J. Brym in his introduction strongly argues against it — is not as important here as the socio-political consequences entailed by the politicization of Judaism in Zionism. The most tragic unintended consequence of the founding of the Jewish state may have been precisely the perpetuation of those conflicts that it originally sought to resolve between Jews and

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non-Jews. As Dan Diner has already indicated (in *Telos* 57, pp. 41-52), the memory of the Holocaust prevents Israel from coming to terms with its calamitous history which, in the middle of the 20th century, encouraged precisely those cultural traits, extraneous to Judaism and derived from a Central European *milieu* to triumph in right-wing Zionism at the expense of its emancipatory left-wing versions. Consequently, much confusion exists concerning what it means to be a Jew, the true nature of the Israeli state and lingering waves of anti-Semitism.

Obviously, these three issues are inextricably related. Unfortunately, discussions of them have been so affected by the trauma of Nazism and by partisan prejudices that it is extremely difficult to look at them with a fresh eye. Yet, unless these issues are carefully sorted out and analyzed, they will remain unresolved at the cost of yet more suffering and human lives. In order to understand the nature of anti-Semitism today, András Kovács traces the untold history of Jews in Hungary to the real contemporary consequences of lingering pre-World War II institutional problems. Notwithstanding explicit universalistic policies ruling out the possibility of anti-Semitism, a poorly understood past has found a way in Hungary to influence the present, thus continuing to reproduce conditions conducive to divisions between Jews and non-Jews. Politically inspired official reluctance to confront this situation in Hungary and elsewhere in the Soviet bloc has only increased possibilities for new forms of anti-Semitism to emerge.

But the past need not remain an insurmountable obstacle. The Catholic Church, through a vigorous policy of *aggiornamento*, has been able to regain a social relevance that in the late 1950s seemed to have been irretrievably lost. Having taken its definitive institutional form during the golden age of feudalism, the Catholic Church came to incorporate that framework in its very structure and outlook. It never quite accepted the bourgeois revolution which it associated — correctly — with Protestant subversion. When, recently, it finally did accept it, it still maintained a critical distance — especially regarding the disintegration of the main institutions of civil society that resulted from the universalization of the commodity form. Thus, it is not surprising that, when in the early 1960s, the old, discredited policies of Pope Pius XII came in for radical reconstitution with Vatican II, the renewed emphasis on social justice and human dignity became a powerful source of opposition to that one-dimensional society that had reduced human beings to exchangeable commodities, and instrumentalized justice to fit the requirements of capitalist rationalization.

Thus, notwithstanding an official, unchanged hostility towards Marxism (all variants of which tend to be uncritically identified with Marxism-Leninism and Soviet Diamat), rapprochement with the Left was all too easy. Giuseppe Chiarante, a functionary of the Italian Communist Party — the least Marxist-Leninist communist party in the world — traces the Catholic Church's development and its new popularity among those masses that it had previously been slowly alienating. But Chiarante does not fail at the same time to point out that Pope John Paul II is also a *conservative.* His emphasis on human dignity and social justice is not a new, convenient and readily marketable political ploy tacked onto an otherwise unchanged Catholic theology. Instead, it is an old position that had only fallen by the wayside over centuries of unsuccessful efforts to roll back the Reformation and, with it, capitalist rationalization. This new emphasis reappears as an integral part of the old Catholic notion of *caritas*. But in this form, it fits in only partially with late 20th-century emancipatory movements. The Church's human dignity and social justice come packaged within somewhat questionable traditional wrappings. As a social philosophy allegedly derived from absolute theological tenets, it could be expected to be somewhat unresponsive to the quali-

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tatively different social relations of late capitalism. It is no surprise, then, that the "new" Church appears insensitive to women's demands for equality, even when it is realized that the disintegration of community and of the family has made the traditional role ascribed them by the Church hopelessly obsolete and impossible to fulfill. The same can be said for other social issues not easily reducible to standard Catholic concerns.

All this, however, is not meant to diminish the enormous social and political impact of the post-Vatican II Church. Parting with the 13th century — or, at least, the mystique of Catholic hegemony — has not come easy. Modernity has been reluctantly digested. Van Dülmen shows how, as late as the 19th century, pilgrimages and cults were used to put brakes on secularization. The cautious openings by Pope Leo XIII eventually gave way to a close encounter with the modern world only in the Second Vatican Council. The willingness of Popes John XXIII and Paul VI to read the "signs of the times" has successfully renewed the Church's moral authority. Thus in many recently decolonialized countries, the Church plays an important social role by defending human rights and creating space within civil society for democratic initiatives. Hughes documents this occurrence in Brazil, especially after the 1964 coup; El Salvador, Poland and the Philippines provide more examples.

The Catholic Church, however, is still solidly hierarchical. Thus, much depends on the Pope. Chiarante indicates that, despite evidence of John Paul's traditionalism, he plans no roll-back of Vatican II. Confident that he has paid his dues to modernity, John Paul is eager to make the most of the Church's expanded vision and moral authority. Hellman describes how the present pope is a philosopher who blends Thomism and traditional Church teaching with phenomenology, while McGovern argues that the encyclical on labor, which condemns classical capitalism for privileging capital, shares much with Marx's critique of alienated labor, but little with traditional Marxism-Leninism — a particularly grim form of dimination of labor by a bureaucratic elite.

While he affirms liberation theology's "option for the poor," John Paul finds several dangers in the movement. There is the tendency to lose the transcendent element of faith by reducing it to a political platform. That can lead to identifying Catholicism with a single political option — a difficulty that increases when that option is Leninist. And, with regard to the Basic Christian Communities, there is concern for Church unity and discipline. While the Chilean Christians for Socialism group was condemned by the hierarchy for perceived abuses along these lines, Hughes notes that leading Brazilian archbishops sympathize with liberation theology: similarly, in replying to Casanova's questions, Maduro shows that liberation thinkers are trying to cope with these difficulties. Casanova wonders if the hierarchical character of the Church disposes radical Catholicism toward Leninism, and he points out the contradiction between the Church's defense of human rights and democracy in the political sphere and its own lack of internal democracy. Whether the practical critique of hierarchy by the basic communities — a kind of Protestant upsurge within the Latin Church — will splinter the Church remains to be seen. At any rate, the Catholic Church in Brazil during the last two decades has become *the* opposition to the military dictatorship resulting from the 1964 coup and, as Maduro stresses, the main debt of liberation theology to Marxism-Leninism may have to do primarily with elementary economics borrowed to make sense of relations of dependence between developed and underdeveloped countries. We can only hope that, in the astonishing leap from a semi-feudal outlook to a socialist vision, liberation theology will not have forgotten altogether about bourgeois civil rights and liberties, as occurs all too frequently in Third World "socialist" societies.

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Unlike the Catholic Church, always ill at ease with capitalism because of its semi-feudal internal structure and outlook, Protestantism fits in too well with a society shaped in its own image. As Tim Luke shows in his analysis of "televangelism," even the most fundamentalist Protestant sects find it easy to adapt to the latest technological developments. Along with every other well-advertised commodity, their evangelism is marketed in the most conformist and reifying way possible. This, however, is far from the whole story. If it is at times difficult to deal with Catholicism as *one* institution — including as it does such disparate branches as the Polish Church and liberation theology — it is many times harder to do so in the case of Protestantism, with its decentralized and multi-denominational character. Thus, conformist televangelism by no means exhausts the political and social role of contemporary Protestantism. As George Lipsitz argues, the same Protestantism that is preached by Oral Roberts and Jerry Falwell also inspired Martin Luther King Jr. and masses of poor people in their quest for social and economic justice. Thus, Protestantism can go either way, depending on the predominant political climate. Institutionalized as a counter-institution during a struggle with the Catholic Church, Protestantism embodies in its very fabric the values of autonomy, social responsibility and self-determination so as to represent a lasting bulwark against totalitarian encroachments. That it also provides a profound theological justification for social inequality and, consequently, occasionally even exploitation, is part of its ineliminable contradictory character. Of all religions, however, it is probably the one that tries hardest to institutionally encourage the retrieval of that religious spirit otherwise bureaucratically smothered in mundane idolatry. From this institutional viewpoint, it may hold the most promising emancipatory possibilities yet.

Given the scope of the subject, it would have been impossible to exhaust the theme of "religion and politics," in one special issue of *Telos*. Consequently, in addition to restricting the focus to some theoretical questions and the main Western religions, the editors have solicited responses from a number of scholars concerning the status of religion today. These responses have been surprisingly diverse. There are passionate defenses as well as an articulate questioning of practically everything that goes under the name of "religion." Had this symposium been held 100, or even 50 years ago, the responses would undoubtedly have been much more uniform. Then it was almost *de rigueur* to be anti-clerical. The churches as institutions were for the most part condemned as reactionary; they were accused of advocating a backward, "un-progressive" worldview. All of this has changed. Most contributions are favorable. They grant that religious attitudes and institutions are critical of modern society and its values. Other contributors are more skeptical. While granting that some churches (e.g., the Catholic Church) have changed recently, they are not convinced that a religious worldview *as such* necessarily represents anything emancipatory. Surprisingly, because the issue was not directly raised, the concept of "transcendence" appears pivotal.

Practically every possible issue regarding "religion and politics" is addressed in this symposium. On the whole, these comments amount to one of the most thorough discussions of religion carried out recently. As such it can be taken as fairly representative of how Left scholars today are responding to religion. Extraneous to the main theme, this issue also contains a contribution by André Gorz continuing a long-standing discussion concerning the peace movement, and a long interview with Claus Offe.

David Gross, Patrick Murray and *Paul Piccone*

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THE LEGEND OF MARX'S ATHEISM*

by Luciano Parinetto

Marx's Canonization

The 1949 edition of the *Great Soviet Encyclopedia* defines atheism as follows: "An authentically scientific theory of militant atheism is found in the ingenious studies of Marx, Engels, Lenin and Stalin. Marxist-Leninist atheism radically distinguishes itself from all previous forms of atheism and opens a new era in the struggle against religious beliefs. The proletarian atheism developed by Marx and Engels is an atheism coherent from beginning to end, and an aggressive one at that. While pre-Marxist, bourgeois atheism was based on a metaphysical materialism, the proletarian one is based on the granite foundations of historical and dialectical materialism — that powerful instrument of scientific knowledge and revolutionary transformation of reality. . . . Proletarian atheism is a materialist ideology which has triumphed in the country of socialism, the Soviet Union, and it unites immense masses of workers all over the world."[1]

The claim that proletarian atheism as an ideology is not a confession, but only a *weak* Leninist use of a term which, in Marx, is inextricably connected with *false consciousness.* If, for Diamat, atheism was really an ideology in the authentic Marxian sense, there would be nothing objectionable in this formulation. Instead, for it, ideology has the neutral meaning of "philosophical conception," so that the definition becomes unacceptable in that it is based on the presupposition that the theories of Marx, Engels, Lenin and Stalin represent a dogmatic corpus of iron-clad unity and continuity.

Any cursory analysis would easily challenge this claim — even the history of Stalinism can readily explain what has happened. "Stalinism," claimed Lukács, "has not even carried out the elementary task of publishing all of Marx's texts — something which would have been very easy — and today we have available only a minimal part of Marx's complete *opus.*"[2] Among Marx's manuscripts which Stalin did not wish to see published are the *Economic and Philosophic Manuscripts of 1844*, where Marx explicitly claims he is not an atheist. Nevertheless, the ignorance of this text is not sufficient to justify Marx's alleged atheism in Diamat ideology. Thus, in *The Holy Family,* atheism is defined as "the last stage of *theism,* the *negative* recognition of God," which should have forewarned Soviet ideologists.

Nor can Marx's alleged atheism be explained solely in terms of Stalin's

*This is a slightly edited version of an article originally published in *Utopia*, III:3 (March 1973), pp. 3-12. Translated by Moishe Gonzales.

1. A. Bansani, ed., *La Religione nell'USSR* (Milan, 1961), pp. 23-24.
2. Cf. Abendroth, Heinz-Holt and Kofler, *Conversazioni con Lukacs* (Bari, 1968), p. 175.

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attempts to force a textual unity. More recently, even officially "de-Stalinized" French Diamat ideologists still claim that Marx and Engels laid "les fondements théoretiques de l'athéisme."[3] In which texts such a theoretical foundation is to be found, however, is not indicated.

In this, Christian theologians are in full agreement with Diamat Marxists, even if they evaluate Marx's "alleged atheism" in totally opposite ways. The theological literature on the subject is too extensive to quote. It may be useful, however, to discuss what has been acclaimed as a "progressive book," that of the Silesian Father Girardi, according to which "the atheistic character of Marxism is not challenged by any serious scholar."[4] Marx was not a Marxist, but so far no one had accused him of not being "a serious scholar." Considering the various mystifying Marxists' misreadings of Marx, the theologians' distortions are understandable, but not thereby justifiable. Thus, it is not unreasonable to require that those who discuss Marx should be familiar with the texts.

The Evacuation

In a funny passage in Martin Buber, one reads that crows "exhibit three singular characteristics. The first is that no non-crow can deal with them since he will not be listened to: with their uproar they will silence his voice. The second is that they are of the opinion that in the world of birds there exist nothing but crows: all those birds who consider themselves as belonging to another type are crows in disguise and must be forced, with an uproar difficult to imagine, to reveal their true nature. The third is that none of them can stand being alone: the crow that leaves the flock dies of fear of loneliness."[5]

The habits of Buber's crows are peculiarly similar to those of some theologians who often cannot avoid a kind of ideological terrorism. Even Maritain has been guilty of this. Updating his account with a touch of psychoanalysis, he has claimed that some atheists "believe they do not believe in God but . . . in reality they unconsciously believe in Him, because the God whose existence they deny is not God, but something else."[6] In other words, God is that being who cannot be denied because, when denied, he turns into something other than what one thought he was! That is, all crows have a God, and there can be nothing other than crows. When some position incompatible with the theological one is held to be, deep down, really identical to it (just superficially deviant), one does not need Diamat to rule out any dialogue with those who consider themselves really *other*. Within such a totalitarian perspective, there can be nothing but belief in God or its opposite: *tertium non datur!* If Marx does not share the theological viewpoint, then he cannot be other than

3. See the "Introduction" to a collection of essays which, interestingly enough, ignores *The Manuscripts of 1844*: G. Badia, P. Bange and E. Botigelli, *Sur la Religion* (Paris, 1968). This is a French translation of a German translation of a Soviet edition which has now appeared even in Italian.

4. Giulio Girardi, *Marxismo e Cristianesimo* (Rome, 1970), p. 47. Father Girardi's confusion of Marx with Diamat Marxism is understandable considering that even non-Stalinist Marxists such as Lucio Lombardo Radice manage to misread Marx's clear texts. See Radice's article in *Il Dialogo alla Prova* (Florence, 1964), p. 87.

5. Martin Buber, *Gog e Magog* (Milan, 1964), pp. 92-93.

6. Jacques Maritain, *Il Significato dell Ateismo Contemporaneo* (Brescia, 1950), p. 9.

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an atheist, and therefore still religious.

The ideology of secularization, which has Marx as one of its main targets, extends this ideological terrorism to historiography. Consider the work of the neo-Thomist Cottier, who has dedicated almost 400 pages to Marx's atheism while overlooking with incredible ease the fact that the young Marx explicitly rejected theism as well as atheism. In other words, for Marx, *tertium datur.* But this radical otherness can only be grasped by theologians as nonreason. Thus Cottier writes that Marx's alleged atheism "is not the conclusion of an argument," i.e., it is not a rational deduction.[7]

Before discussing Cottier's account further, it may be useful to pause on the concept of *secularization* employed by those who, like Father Cottier or the Protestant Karl Löwith, theologically manipulate the history of modern philosophy by almost reducing it to a heresy of Christian dogma. In other words, the ideologists of secularization seek to show how some of today's most important non-religious thinkers present ideas which, although *apparently* differing from the theological one, are but versions of dogmatic ones. Thus, within atheism itself, theology reappears triumphant.

Cottier's otherwise informative book is an example of this mystification. For example, consider his approach to alienation, the central category of his book. It is nothing but a variant (a deterioration) of Paul's theme of *kénosis* (*evacuatio*)! Cottier goes so far as to substitute *kénosis* for *Entäusserung* in order to emphasize its Christian character. And here Cottier candidly betrays his own secret: he translated *Entäusserung* with *kénosis* "in order to emphasize an implication of Marx's thought *of which maybe he himself was not aware.*"[8] This is a peculiar historiography, where what is important is not so much what, for example, Hegel or Descartes *actually* thought, but what *unconsciously* haunted them. While Cottier provides some useful philological details (e.g., the emphasis on the Lutheran translation of *ekénosen* of Paul's text with "hat sich selbst geeussert"), he goes too far when he derives Hegel's and Marx's "externalization" from the "divine emptying" in Christ, as if the latter was the authentic and exclusive archetype of *Entäusserung.*

A more credible use of Cottier's impressive philological knowledge would have traces *kénosis to its subversive rather than its conservative roots.* He could have traced it back to Thomas Münzer's theology — a little closer in time to Hegel than to Paul of Tarsus. In Münzer, the theme of emptying (*Entwerdung*) is "transposed from the level of a metaphysics of being to that of ethical engagement [and] will translate into a rejection of the existing unjust social order."[9] *Evacuatio* — "a technical term in mysticism referring to the act whereby man is emptied from the cares of the world"[10] — reverses its usual meaning in Münzer's thought. From an escape from the world, it comes to indicate (through what Bloch has emphasized is a conversion towards atheism in Christian mysticism) an engagement in the world. In this inversion, the theological empty-

7. Georges Cottier, *L'Athéisme du jeune Marx* (Paris, 1959), p. 358.
8. *Ibid.,* p. 246.
9. Cf. E. Campi, "Introduzione" to Thomas Münzer, *Scritti Politici* (Claudiana, 1972), p. 22.
10. *Ibid.,* p. 80.

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ing (*leherwerden*) turns into a mundane becoming-other, which prefigures Rousseau's alienation.

But what would be the relevance of emphasizing Münzer's *Entwerdung* or *leherwerden*? No one can deny the extensive cultural background of the category of alienation in, e.g., Rousseau. It is doubtful, however, that what can be grasped through Paul's *kénosis,* Luther's *geeussert*, or Münzer's *Entwerdung* could provide the historical specificity of Rousseau's texts, had they been lost. The same can be said of the texts of Marx and Hegel. De Negri is not wrong in writing that "Hegel's system integrates a tremendous amalgam of Protestant reform theology, and of ingenious epistemological visions"; even if he correctly emphasizes "how much theologism has passed — through a path from which depart, both to the right as well as to the left innumerable branches — in that thought that calls itself laic."[11] Granting Hegel's theological heritage, what is crucial in his thought is the "tremendous amalgam" and not simply a heresy to be challenged by an alleged genuine Christology, as seems to be the intent of those who talk about "secularization."[12]

But even if Hegel's Christology were nothing but a Christian heresy, and even if Marx's thought was nothing but a Hegelian heresy, what should one conclude? That we are all crows? Or that Christian theology leads to revolution? If, however, the Christologization of Marx seeks to reduce him to an impotent sweet Jesus protector of manipulation, then it becomes necessary to show how Marx not only denounced Hegel's theology as a mystification rooted in the archetypical mystification of Christian mythology, but also how he always openly rejected Christianity.[13] Yet, this rejection of religion (especially of Christianity) cannot be interpreted as an atheism.

For Marx, atheism and religion are false opposites in that they flow into one another. Each is the dialectical reversal of the other. Atheism does not necessarily exclude religion, as can be seen with Buddhism, an atheistic religion *par excellence.* Similarly, negative theology, from pseudo-Diogenes to Cardinal Cusano, claims that being does not pertain to God: "In deo non est ens nec esse . . . . Esse formaliter non est in deo . . . . Deo ergo non competit esse."[14] Thus, if religion can be atheist, the Marxian position can be radically anti-religious: post-atheist [*non-più-atea*].

Search for Grandma

The discourse of "secularization" is mystifying, and Bloch is perfectly right, with respect to Löwith, to ironically dismiss it as "that kind of epistemological search . . . for grandma in mythology; at least with its secondary aim of representing the grandson as one who brings to ruin the ancient goods of the tem-

11. Cf. Enrico De Negri, "Teologia e Storicismo," introduction to *I Principi di Hegel* (Florence, 1949), pp. xv and xxv.

12. Thus, that the theme of incarnation (*Menschwerdung*) reappears modified even in the *Phenomenology* does not change the fact that, granting to Cottier that Hegel's work is an enormous exemplification of the *kénosis-Menschwerdung,* this still fails to fully grasp its historical specificity. The same can be said of the derivation of the dialectical process (*Fortsetzung*) from the Trinity. See Cottier, *op.cit.,* p. 29 and p. 32.

13. Cf. Karl Marx, *Sulla Religione* (Milan, 1972), especially the chapter on "Anti-kriege."

14. Cf. Meister Eckhart, *La Nascita Eterna* (Florence, 1953), pp. 8-10.

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ple."[15] Bloch's conclusion is that "a good content . . . is not weakened by the fact of being rectified and, even more obviously, it is not secularized by the fact of being realized with its being put back on its feet."[16] Bloch is taking aim not just at Löwith, but also Cottier and all those who imagine some kind of incest among Hegelianism, Marxism, and Christian theology.

Consider the following examples of the search for grandma in Cottier's book. *Aufhebung* is seen as the secularization of Paul's exultation; *Entfremdung* as the secularization of the sinner's estrangement from God; *Gattungswesen* as the laicization of the Holy Ghost, and "the Marxian idea of alienation is nothing other than the explication of transcendence from the viewpoint of immanentism." "Burdened with universal suffering, the proletariat is the echo of Isaiah's suffering serf. It is the messiah and, like the Christ of some Lutheran theology, in order to fulfill its own redemptive mission, must first of all be sin and blasphemy . . . . The proletariat is the protagonist in a kind of Easter mystery;" "Marx's labor is the last expression of . . . Hegel's Christology;" "Marx's world without God is populated by entities. The first of them is Man himself as *Gattungswesen.*"[17]

The museum of horrors does not stop here. Some even propose a further secularization of Marx along the lines of "Claude Trésmontant, who points out that Marx's theses are authentic ontological and metaphysical theses: [in the *Manuscripts of 1844*] Marx claims that the world and nature do not owe their being to anyone else, they exist *for themselves,* they are ontologically sufficient. Marx attributes to the world and nature what theologians attribute to God: existence for itself, in itself . . . We have no doubt that the world exists on its own, that it is self-sufficient, that evolution is self-creating. All these are claims which can be scientifically studied and which must still be proven, while in the way Marx posed them they are grounded in ontology and metaphysics."[18] Given this epistemological search for grandma in mythology (which here con-

15. For Bloch, this is a revisionist operation similar to the one seeking to manipulate Marxism by rooting it "in an alleged unitary classical origin." Consequently, "Marxism . . . without regard for its more peculiar proletarian-revolutionary sources, was reduced to a doctrine at least still rational, even if decidedly not materialist. But, then, in the late bourgeoisie, especially in Germany, there was a growth of irrationalism. Accordingly, it became possible to denigrate Marxism by tracing it back to absolutely mythical origins. Consequently, instead of the previously fashionable Kantianization or the Hegelianization, now it was sought to annihilate it by charging it with plagiarism. This gave rise to an ineffable fetishism of sources whereby from Marx one goes back to Joachim of Fiore or to Augustine or even to the mythical awaiting for salvation of proto-history . . . . The target is Marx: he is arrested and unmasked as if he were a sacrilegious thief. All this is accomplished by means of secularization . . . . After that humanity is nothing more than the trivialized Son of Man, proletarian solidarity is only a cheap reprint of the charitable communism of early Christians, the reign of freedom is equivalent exclusively to the Reign of the Sons of God, and all this unfolds at the level of the lowest atheistic pseudo-Enlightenment. Here, on the whole, historical materialism is the 'history of salvation in the language of political economy' and 'communist faith' is a 'pseudomorphosis of Judeo-Christian messianism.' Of a Marxism so baptized, wholly masked as plagiarism, and magically liquidated, it is neither scandalous nor surprising to claim that 'compared to Marx's, Hegel's philosophy is realistic.' " See Ernst Bloch, *Karl Marx* (Bologna, 1972), pp. 52-53.

16. *Ibid.,* p. 54.

17. Cottier, *op.cit.,* pp. 32, 34, 67, 158, 176, 258 and 368.

18. Ferdinando Ormea, *La Religione del Giovane Hegel* (Milan, 1972), p. 21.

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fuses Marx and Darwin), it may be useful to clarify the matter by recourse to Marx's own texts — especially a passage in *The Holy Family,* where he exorcises speculative philosophy by describing its procedure: "Having distorted *my* question on my lips, and having put its own question there instead, like the catechism, it could naturally have a ready answer to all my questions, also like the catechism."[19]

Post-Atheism

At least once — in *The Holy Family* — Marx defined atheism as "the abolition of religion,"[20] but there he was explicitly referring to Bruno Bauer's alienated conception of it. His own view, as already indicated, is that atheism is "the last stage of *theism*, the *negative* recognition of God."[21] Thus, he considers atheism as an upside-down religion. As he writes in *The Manuscripts of 1844*, atheism is the "abolition of God"[22] which, in that abolition, postulates the existence of man. Within atheism, man cannot be defined other than in relation to this religious object that he rejects and with which he remains connected, as if it were an ineliminable presupposition. Because of this relation of dependence, even if only negative, the atheist remains religious.

From the Hegelian perspective of the dialectic of self-consciousness, man becomes man only when he is so recognized by another man (and vice versa). Hence, both the atheist and the religious individual are not yet men to the extent that their recognition, negatively or positively, is not based on man but on some other entity. In this sense, Marx's humanism is consistent in rejecting the religious viewpoint, both atheist and theist, because it is not a recognition of man as such, but of man as sub-human, an entity dependent on some other entity. Thus, Marx's perspective is not atheist. Marx knows very well that "communism begins from the outset (Owen) with atheism, but atheism is at first far from being communism."[23] Pre-Marxian communism is atheist; Marx's communism is post-atheist in that it represents a totally new position, i.e., the self-postulation of man over himself.

What, following Bloch, can be called post-atheism, has to be considered from both a historical and a theoretical perspective. According to the first, developed primarily in the famous fragment dealing with the history of materialism in *The Holy Family,* Marx showed how atheism not only was not part of his outlook, but also that it was the outlook of the bourgeoisie in its struggle against feudal residues. Not by accident, Marx refers to Pierre Bayle and his claim that there could be a society of atheists, that atheists can be upright individuals, and that man is degraded not by atheism, but by superstition and idolatry. At the end of the 17th century, Bayle had announced the coming of an atheist society, and he had paved the way for a bourgeois culture which was to express in its anti-theological and anti-metaphysical positions,

19. Karl Marx and Frederick Engels, *The Holy Family* (Moscow, 1956), p. 121.
20. *Ibid.,* pp. 96, 120.
21. *Ibid.,* p. 148.
22. Karl Marx, *The Economic and Philosophic Manuscripts of 1844,* translated by Martin Milligan (New York, 1964), p. 187.
23. *Ibid.,* p. 136.

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its struggle against feudal residues. Thus, atheism is a specific expression of the bourgeois Enlightenment — one of the ideological weapons in the bourgeois revolution. As such, it is not to be confused with the outlook of those advocating a revolution against the bourgeoisie.

By accepting Marx's alleged atheism (at least up to the point that it can be construed as a criticism of the superstition and idolatry to which the Christian divinity can be degraded), some Catholics willingly confuse Marx's position with that of the bourgeoisie. But Marx's rejection of atheism is based on the fundamental distinction of Marxian communism from every preceding form and on the dialectical relation man/man and man/nature as its main presuppositions. As is well known, in *The Manuscripts of 1844,* Marx distinguished three forms of communism. The crude variety is nothing but a generalization of private property. It denies man's personality (e.g., in the common sharing of women) and, as the expression of universal envy and greed, is nothing but the *Vollendung* of a society based on private property and competition. The second form is political communism, which goes as far as advocating the abolition of the state. This is not Marx's communism since it has not yet reached its fulfillment, i.e., it is still connected to private property as the estrangement of man, although it rejects it. Thus, it is a negative communism. The third form is Marx's positive communism, which not only projects the abolition of private property understood as man's self-estrangement, but also the arrival of a historically developed man for himself. It is the identification of humanism and naturalism: the true resolution of the antagonism man/man and man/nature.

Marx knows very well that this project of revolution is a not-yet — to use Bloch's term — and that it aims at the future in a utopian way. He also knows that the dialectic will not stop during the phase of positive communism — also because it is not the *end* of history, but rather its *beginning.* Thus, it cannot be argued that, having reached this point, humanity would cease, *adialectically*, its own free self-projection.

This radically new position of positive communism is not, as Cottier thinks,[24] a departure from the dialectic so that Marx would have to "assume a resting place, a definitive state." Cottier's objection does not make sense if one recalls that for Marx, positive communism is not a final arrival point, but rather the beginning of history. Similarly, to work freely, to creatively project oneself, is an essential characteristic of future man. Hence, this man remains immersed in the dialectic which is the bond that relates man and nature as *being-other.* What is the relation between post-atheism and what Marx, in *The Manuscripts of 1844* defined as "the hypothesis of socialism," i.e., the concrete utopia of positive communism?

By now it is clear that there is a parallel between atheism as the negative recognition of God and negative communism as the negative recognition of private property. In both cases, man remains dependent on what he negates. He is not yet "for himself." Quite different is the situation of positive com-

24. Cottier, *op.cit.,* pp. 359-360.

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munism as a radical new position, a leap from prehistory to history where he no longer need define himself negatively, but can now rest positively on himself. In the same way, he does not recognize himself as postulated through rejection of God. To the extent that he considers himself no longer a proletarian, he is also post-atheist.

Marx's post-atheism is, consequently, at the very heart of the concrete utopia of positive communism. To reject God for love of man is not Marx's viewpoint but rather that of a pre-Marxian communism: "The philosophy of atheism . . . is at first only *philosophical,* abstract, philanthropy, and that of communism is at once *real* and directly bent on action."[25]

The Absurd Question

What is presupposed by man's self-postulation and, consequently, post-atheism? Marx's presuppositions are certainly not those indicated by theologians as an original ethical choice or an arbitrary beginning which, as such, would be on the same level as similar arbitrary beginnings — those of theology, for example. In *The German Ideology*, Marx admits that his own account has presuppositions. But these are not freely chosen since it is a matter of real presuppositions, i.e., real individuals, their actions and their material conditions of existence. These are not dogma but presuppositions from which one can abstract only in the imagination.

Alienation does not originate from an axiological and generally humanistic *pietas* but proceeds "from an economic fact of *the* present. The worker becomes all the poorer the more wealth he produces . . . . The worker becomes an ever cheaper commodity the more commodities he creates."[26] And in the "Preface" to *The Manuscripts of 1844*, Marx mentions the results "achieved by means of an analysis entirely empirical, based on a careful study of political economy." But this beginning with the facts does not amount, as some have claimed,[27] to following a "merely positivistic line." To claim the ineliminability of specific non-arbitrary presuppositions to develop a coherent argument is not exclusively the prerogative of positivism, which is based on a metaphysics foreign to Marx's thought. But Marx was not satisfied with appealing to unchallengeable presuppositions; he also justified their non-arbitrary character. And it is here that the theme of atheism reappears.

In *The Manuscripts of 1844*, he showed that it is impossible to undertake a meaningful discourse that does not recognize man himself as a presupposition. This argument is triggered by the discussion of God's creation of man and the world. For Marx, this is a badly posed problem: "When you ask about the creation of nature and man, you are abstracting, in so doing, from man and nature. You postulate them as *non-existent*. . . . Now I say to you: Give up your abstraction and you will also give up your question. Or, if you want to hold on to your abstraction, then be consistent, and if you think of man and

25. Marx, *The Manuscripts of 1844, op.cit.,* p. 136.
26. *Ibid.,* p. 107.
27. Virgilio Melchiorre, "Osservazioni su una Recente Raccolta di Scritti Marxiani sulla Religione," *Humanitas* (July 1972), p. 552.

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nature as *non-existent,* then think of yourself as non-existent, for you too are surely nature and man. Don't think, don't ask me, for as soon as you think and ask, your *abstraction* from the existence of man and nature has no meaning. Or are you such an egoist that you conceive everything as nothing, and yet want yourself to exist?"[28]

Consequently, the question of the precedence and independence of God over man and nature *cannot be posed*: "Ask yourself how you arrived at that question. Ask yourself whether your question is not posed from a standpoint to which I cannot reply because it is wrongly put. Ask yourself whether that progression as such exists for a reasonable mind." In abstracting from himself and from nature, man cannot surreptitiously avoid presupposing himself and nature, which are consequently also presupposed by every *Weltvernichtung*. Thus, it is not legitimate to abstract from them. But it is precisely through this illegitimate abstraction that the question of God as an entity in itself can be asked. In other words, man cannot meaningfully think of being created; while history irresistibly proves to him that he originates, not in his *animal immediacy,* but in his *human sociality.* Thus, man and nature are so inextricably interconnected that human thought cannot be explained either by a divinity or a nature in itself. Sex, hunger, needs and passions irresistibly demonstrate the externality of objects and of nature. From a Marxian framework, it is not possible to discuss nature and matter without already presupposing the man who undertakes that discussion through a language presupposing a human collectivity at a certain level of civilization. Thus, the problem of God makes sense only within the world of man. The dual structure of human self-consciousness emphasized by Hegel, Feuerbach and more implicitly by Marx accounts for the origin of the belief in the religious object and therefore of the form and modality of religion: an alienation which gradually assumes specific historical aspects inextricably connected to specific socio-economic structures. For Marx, man is the true presupposition of God. But this is not the alienated man (as Marx already pointed out, against Kant, in his doctoral dissertation) who has not yet perceived how both the objectivity of God as well as of paper money are functions of the value given them by the human collectivity. Rather, it is man freed of alienation (at least, the religious type) who knows himself as its own presupposition.

Self-Positing

This man simply postulates himself and has no need of any indeterminable divinity. Only at the end of the demonstration of the improbability of the dependence, through creation, of man on God, does Marx claim that "since for the socialist man the *entire so-called history of the world* is nothing but the creation of man through human labor, nothing but the emergence of nature for man, so he has the visible, irrefutable proof of his *birth* through himself, of the *process of his creation.*"[29] Thus, "since man has become for man as the being of nature, and nature for man as the being of man has become practical, sen-

28. Marx, *The Manuscripts of 1844, op.cit.,* p. 145.
29. *Ibid.*

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suous, perceptible — the question about an *alien* being, a being above nature and man — has become impossible in practice." And every posing of a problem, of course, presupposes a subject doing this posing, i.e., the ineliminability of man.

In this sense, the impossibility of posing the question of God is not an unmotivated original ethical choice in Marx, as various theologians claim. Rather, it is the realization of the *logical* impossibility of posing the problem of God. This realization cannot be considered atheism or anti-theism (struggle against God) since "*atheism* as the denial of this unreality has no longer any meaning, for atheism is a *negation of God*, and postulates the *existence of man* through this negation; but socialism as socialism no longer stands in any need of such a mediation." It "is man's *positive self-consciousness,* no longer mediated through the annulment of religion, just as *real life* is man's positive reality, no longer mediated through the annulment of private property, through *communism*."[30]

If, theoretically, post-atheism can be prefigured before the advent of positive communism (and this is why it can co-exist with the radical critique of religion), it can be fully realized only in it. Post-atheism is thus an inextricable part of Marx's positive communism. As far as a state-sponsored atheism is concerned, in the *Deutsch-Französische Jahrbücher* Marx observed that "the man that proclaims himself atheist through the state remains nonetheless religiously bound precisely because he recognizes himself only in a vicious circle — through a mediator."[31] Thus, a state atheism is analogous to a state religion and it is by no means a prelude to post-atheism. This is not one of Marx's youthful and purely theoretical positions. In the harsh 1871 political clash with Bakunin in the First International, among the elements of radical disagreement with the "Anarchist Alliance," Marx, not by accident, emphasized the sterility of the *Atheismus-streit.* He argued that, from the viewpoint of religion, atheism is relatively irrelevant when compared to the critique of property relations. In other words, confronted with an attack on its source of wealth (the true God!), the church is ready to unleash "the furies of private interest"[32] far more readily than when confronted with an innocuous atheism. Hence, it is primarily in the economic dimension that it must be attacked. Marx's post-atheism had so little to do with an esoteric and provisional doctrine that in the 1870s, Engels himself, whose critique of religion differs significantly from Marx's,[33] held fast to his friend's position: "One can say that, for the enormous majority of the German social democrats, atheism is a stage they have already gone beyond. This word with a purely negative meaning applies to them to the extent that they are no longer theoretical, but only

30. *Ibid.*, pp. 145-146.
31. Reprinted in Luciano Parinetto, ed., Karl Marx, *Sulla Religione* (Milan, 1972), p. 189.
32. Karl Marx, *Prefazione del 1867* (Rome, 1964), p. 34.
33. As Fetscher has pointed out, Engels' critique of religion "moves away from its origins in humanistic anthropology" and takes on positivist and Darwinist elements to subsequently develop in this form in the large majority of other Marxist authors." Cf. Iring Fetscher, *Il Marxismo*, Vol. I (Milan, 1970), p. 10.

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practical, adversaries of religion."[34] Marx's alleged atheism that pollutes Diamat is derivable neither from Marx nor from Engels.

Marx's post-atheism is not theologically comprehensible either as an assertive atheism or as anti-theism.[35] Nor is it a peaceful agnosticism since it does not rule out, during prehistory, an indirect struggle against religion. But God and religion are clearly distinguishable. Religion is a specific, historically rooted human institution. Thus, it is appropriate to take a position toward it. Since religious alienation is a metaphor exemplifying every other form of alienation, Marx constantly keeps an eye on it, from the early writings to *Capital*. Thus, post-atheism does not remove Saint Prometheus from the Marxian calendar, but instead finds it inseparable from that critique of religion which is the presupposition of every other critique. Post-atheism also rules out Cottier's interpretation of Marx's *Gattungswesen* as a secularization of God still bearing "the mark of transcendence" so that "Marx's God-less world would be populated by entities and, first and foremost, by Man himself as *Gattungswesen*."[36] But, for Marx, man's autonomy is certainly not grabbed away from God or deduced from Him. Rather, it is derived from the history of human labor. *Gattungswesen* cannot be approached as if it were an entity of scholastic theology. As indicated in the "Theses on Feuerbach," human essence is the whole of social relations. It is not a meta-historical ontological or metaphysical entity, unless one understands it in the specific Blochian sense: ontology of what-is-not-yet, and metaphysics as a temporal horizontal transcendence. Only by explicitly relating it to Marx's "concrete utopia" is it possible to accept the definition of *Gattungswesen* as a metaphysical entity, and the meaning of "ontology" in *The Manuscripts of 1844*. Every time Marx mentions *Gattungswesen* he refers not so much to an existing entity (the whole of existing but alienated social relations), but to a not-yet-being: the total man as the multi-sided, free and creative worker. The transcendence of the *Gattungswesen* is not that of the collectivity with respect to the individual, but primarily that of a *futurum* seeking a revolutionary dissolution of the present. It is not an abstract ethical ideal but, rather, is an elaboration of the experience of alienation. It has empirical and not arbitrary presuppositions. Thus, every effort by the old metaphysical and ontological theology to recoup Marx's *Gattungswesen* is philologically doomed.

At any rate, it is not possible to recoup Marx even for that part of theology which has lost its religious object and bemoans the death of God. This theology would also like to secularize Marx by claiming that, "in Marx, divine reality becomes historical process,"[37] thus becoming the announcer of the Word which negates himself. Here the theology of the death of God dusts off

34. Cf. Frederick Engels, *Saggi degli Anni 1871-1874*, "The Blanquists," cited in A. Lunekarskij, *Religione e Socialismo* (Milan, 1973), p. 19.

35. For definitions of these terms, see V. Miano, "Religione e Atteismo Contemporaneo," in *Dio è Morto?* (Milan, 1969), p. 88. Miano himself, however, admits that the use of these terms is somewhat fluctuating.

36. Cottier, *op.cit.*, p. 368.

37. Cf. Altizer and Hamilton, *La Morte di Dio* (Milan, 1969), p. 187.

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and recycles "an authentic movement of embodiment" through which "the primordial God must die by accepting or affirming the reality of the profane." Only "after the fall can it allow the birth of a faith which confronts real conditions in the world and can move forward, through alienation and estrangement, towards an eschatological end transcending a primordial principle."[38]

According to this new (!) theology, the dialectic of Christianity would consist precisely in the "negation of original participation," which "can allow itself a final participation . . . reachable only through fall and death, towards a final and definitive reconciliation of the sacred and the profane." "Through this negation of the negation what was originally sacred will be negated," so that this death of God (a God devoid of divinity and no longer Lord or cosmic Logos) must be understood as a negation in view of God's return, as the final and definitive conciliation of the sacred and the profane. On a closer analysis, then, this is not a real death of God, but only the hibernation of his primordial larva, pending a final triumphant transformation. Here atheism is but a pause dialectically relating two affirmations of God. Marx was right in rejecting it as a form of religion and in contraposing it to his own post-atheism, which even the most clever dialectical theology cannot instrumentalize.

At any rate, there is an evident contradiction between the theologian's assertion that today all claims concerning Jesus are nothing more than "empty shells of what was once a vital faith" and the simultaneous claim that Jesus is *the Word* (even if "a Word devoid of God") witnessed only "in the existence of a dismayed and suffering humanity."[39] Here it is useful to quote a passage in Marx where he demystifies the Hegelianism in the theology of the death of God. Its main scheme is the following: God (the primordial God) is postulated; he is subsequently negated (the death of God) while remaining optimistically waiting for his dialectically transfigured eschatological representation — a negation of the negation so orthodoxically Hegelian as to remove the original God in the conciliation of the final and total *coincidentia oppositorum* of the sacred and the profane.

To this new theological reintegration of atheism one must contrapose Marx's critique of mystification whereby "Hegel sets out from the estrangement of substance (in logic, from the infinite, the abstractly universal) . . . which means, but popularly, that he sets out from religion and theology. Secondly, he annuls the infinite and establishes the actual, sensuous, real, finite, particular (philosophy — annulment of religion and theology). Thirdly, he again annuls the positive and restores the abstraction, the infinite — restoration of religion and theology." But "if I *know* religion as *alienated* human self-consciousness, then what I know in it as religion is not my self-consciousness, but my alienated self-consciousness confirmed in it. I therefore know my own self, the self-consciousness that belongs to its very nature, confirmed not in *religion* but rather in *annihilated* and *superseded* religion. In Hegel, therefore, the negation of the negation is not the confirmation of the true essence, effected

38. *Ibid.*, pp. 166-172.
39. *Ibid.*, pp. 153-154.

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precisely through negation of the pseudo-essence."[40]

If the theology of the death of God had fully understood this critique and the meaning of Marx's *post-atheism,* it probably would not have become entangled in the archaic Hegelian swamp of alienation and may have been able to come to (and this applies also to traditional theology) an evacuation much more radical than the one that it preaches: its own evacuation. Only as such could it have truly converted to the categorical imperative indicated by Marx as the necessary consequence of the true critique of religion: "to overturn all relations in which man is a subjected, humiliated, abandoned and disreputable being."

40. Marx, *The Manuscripts of 1844, op.cit.,* pp. 172 and 185.

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THE HISTORY OF RELIGION AS SOCIAL SCIENCE

by Richard van Dülmen

To assume that the study of religion[1] is the task of ecclesiastical history would be at best only partly true, since this discipline has always regarded itself as part of theology.[2] The premises of an extra-historical creation of the Church and its foundation in Revelation prevent a broadening of the history of religion[3] from regarding religion and other cultures as social products. Such a broadening is precisely what I propose. A transformation of denominational church history into an institutional history of Christianity is possible,[4] because it can leave the underlying questions untouched. But a history of religion as social science must be independent of any dogma or committed theology.[5]

History of religion as a social science faces a problem which also affects other disciplines. It is the problem of an accurate definition.[6] As long as the

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1. It is significant that in the most important historical lexicons the rubric "religion" is missing. Cf. B.W. Besson ed., *Geschichte*, (Frankfurt, 1961); E. Bayer ed., *Wörterbuch zur Geschichte* (Stuttgart, 1960); K. Juchs and H. Raab eds., *dtv-Wörterbuch zur Geschichte* (Munich, 1972), 2 vols.; G. Schulz ed., *Geschichte heute. Positionen, Tendenzen und Probleme* (Göttingen, 1973).

2. E. Iserloh, "Was ist Kirchengeschichte?" in R. Kottje ed., *Kirchengeschichte heute. Geschichtswissenschaft oder Theologie?* (Trier, 1970), p. 27. Cf. also W. Pannenberg, *Wissenschaftstheorie und Theologie* (Frankfurt, 1973), p. 406; H. Jedin ed., *Handbuch der Kirchengeschichte*, vol. I (Freiburg, 1963), "Introduction". Unfortunately, M. Jacobs, "Kirchen-und sozialgeschichte in ihrer Beziehung," in *Evangelische Theologie*, n. 6 (1976), pp. 510-516, is not helpful in this context.

3. C. Mönnich, "Die Kirchengeschichte im Rahmen der anthropologischen Wissenschaften," in *Concilium*, n. 6 (1970); A. Alberigo, "Neue Grenzen der Kirchengeschichte?" in *Ibid.*, no. 6 (1970); also H. Vicaire, "Histoire religieuse ou histoire politique," in *Annales* 7 (1952); and L. Genicot, "Histoire de l'Eglise, du catholicisme, du christianisme ou de la vie religieuse," in *Revue d'histoire ecclesiastique*, n. 65 (1970); E. Saurer, "Kirchengeschichte als historische Disziplin?" in *Wiener Beiträge zur Geschichte der Neuzeit*, n. 1 (1974), pp. 1-69. Useful ideas can be found in: J. Trautwein, *Religiosität und Sozialstruktur. Untersucht anhand der Entwicklung des württembergischen Pietismus* (Stuttgart, 1972); H. Lehmann, *Pietismus und weltliche Ordnung in Württemberg vom 17. bis zum 20. Jahrhundert*, (Stuttgart, 1969); C.P. Clasen, *Anabaptism. A Social History 1525-1618* (Ithaca, 1972). These books already point beyond the traditional goals of church history.

4. Cf. K.D. Schmidt and E. Wolf eds., *Die Kirche in ihrer Geschichte (G*öttingen, 1961); T. Rendtorff, *Christentum zwischen Revolution und Restauration* (Munich, 1970); F.W. Kautzenbach, *Christentum in der Gesellschaft*, (Hamburg, 1975/76), 2 vols.

5. Cf. C.M. Edsman, "Theologie oder Religionswissenschaft?" in G. Lanczkowski ed., *Selbstverständnis und Wesen der Religionswissenschaft* (Darmstadt, 1974), pp. 320-59; M. Simon, "Religionsgeschichte, Geschichte des Christentums, Kirchengeschichte. Methodologische Überlegungen," in *Ibid.*, pp. 301-19.

6. Cf. R. Robertson, *Einführung in die Religionssoziologie* (Munich, 1973), especially the chapter on "Grundlegende Definitionsprobleme," pp. 48-68; See also "Religion" in *Die Religion in Geschichte und Gesellschaft* Hans Frhr. V. Campenhansen *et al.* eds. (Tübingen: J.C.B. Mohr, 1957) vol. V (1961), pp. 961-984; and J. Matthes, *Religion und Gesellschaft. Einführung in die Religionssoziologie (RGG)*, vol. I, (Reinbeck, 1967), and vol. II, (Reinbeck, 1969).

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study of religion accepts concepts established by the church, the difficulties are minimized, but at the expense of overlooking key issues. If it assumes that religion is a social phenomenon, then all known definitions fail. Definitions of religion are either so different that they are mutually exclusive, or so general and formal that they prove inadequate for a study of concrete religious institutions. This is why historiography avoids definitions and follows everyday language.

Neither Otto's definition of religion as the experience of the sacred,[7] nor Mensching's as an experiential encounter with the sacred and people's responses to it[8] are adequate. Both assume an ahistorical phenomenology. Thus, it is not surprising that Weber refused to preface his work in the sociology of religion with a concept of religion. What religion is, he wrote, can be determined only at the end of an investigation.[9] More helpful than Otto's or Mensching's, is Luckmann's definition of religion as a "socially formed, more or less solidified, more or less obligatory system of symbols . . . which combines a world-outlook and the legitimation of natural and social orders transcending the individual with practical guidance on how to live."[10] This definition is applicable to old and new, as well as to Christian and non-Christian religions. It is not based on external properties such as particular rites, beliefs or institutions, and it does not list merely formal criteria limited to consciousness.

No less problematic are typologies seeking to encompass the multiplicity of types of historical manifestations. They are poor substitutes for a definition in that they remain too formal or dogmatic.[11] Emphasis on theologies with the greatest following divides world religions into Christianity, Islam, Hinduism, Buddhism, etc. This provides a clue to the differing doctrinal systems but without differentiating between religions as such and more "profane" worldviews. Similarly, typologies based on particular "external" features result in a distinction of folk, nature, culture and revealed religion.[12] But since the form religion takes in particular groups and differently structured societies is overlooked, contradictions frequently result between the type and its concrete manifestations. Historically, Christianity appears in all forms. Also problematic is an approach based exclusively on types of organizations. distinction between church and sects or theocracy and priestly rule (hierocracy)

7. R. Otto, *Das Heilige* (Munich, 1963); for an English version, see *The Idea of the Holy*, J.W. Harvey trans. (Oxford University Press: New York, 1958). See also H. Clavier, "Wiederaufbruch eines Methodenproblems in der Religionsgeschichte," in Lanczkowski, ed., *Religionswissenschaft*, pp. 272-302.

8. G. Mensching, "Religion" in *RGG*, vol. V, p. 961; and G. Mensching, *Soziologie der Religion* (Bonn, 1947).

9. M. Weber, *Wirtschaft und Gesellschaft* (Tübingen, 1925) vol. I (*Religionssoziologie*); for an English version, see *Economy and Society*, G. Roth and C. Wittich eds., E. Fischoff *et al.* trans. (Bedminster Press: New York, 1968).

10. "Introduction" by T. Luckmann, in B. Malinowski *Magie, Wissenschaft und Religion und andere Schriften*, (Frankfurt, 1973), p. xi.

11. See K. Goldammer, *Die Formenwelt des Religiösen. Grundriss der systematischen Religionswissenswissenschaft* (Stuttgart, 1960).

12. Cf. the typologization in G. Mensching, "Typen der Religion" in *RGG*, vol. V, p. 964 ff., as well as the critical remarks by Robertson, *op. cit.*, pp. 134-152.

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cannot be applied to all societies. The form of organization of religion is central, yet, the universal dimension becomes clear only when the doctrine's historicity is also considered. That unorganized movements are ignored in this typology remains a central problem. Finally, there are attempts to describe religion according to its practices, particular rites, or its ethic. But there are difficulties in distinguishing profane from sacral cults, because cults can also take over power in archaic, feudal or even in modern societies. Although it is impossible to dispense with such typologies, these scanty allusions make it clear that attempts which do not pay adequate attention to spacio-temporal factors are inadequate as a basis for a history of religion which claims to explain religion in terms of society as a whole.[13]

Although today the three main theories of the history of religion: the theses of compensation, integration, and secularization (Marx, Durkheim and Weber) have been rejected, they are still helpful[14] if they are constantly confronted with concrete processes, and if they forfeit the claim to explain all societies, situations, and religious phenomena. As Durkheim indicated, religion, as collective consciousness, can provide social cohesion so that it can be seen as an idea society has of itself. But that religion should remain just as true in some primitive societies as in certain political systems where it functions as an ideology, conceals social coercion. In this Marxist sense, religion can be understood as social consciousness expressing human alienation in class societies. Finally, the problem of the constituting function of religion remains relevant in the framework of Weber's account of secularization.[15] According to it, given certain affinities of religious doctrine with particular social strata, religion fulfilled a social function when, e.g., Protestantism promoted a socio-economic change which subsequently became autonomous. The concepts of "collective representation" in Durkheim, of "ideology" in Marx and of "secularization" in Weber remain significant to the extent that they contribute to explain certain processes. Robertson's, (and especially Berger's and Luckmann's work) show this most clearly.[16] They offer the possibility of explaining movements that remain unintelligible in terms of the old theory.

Religion is fundamentally different in traditional, modern, and Third World societies. It is impossible here to retrace the development of whole systems of religion; to analyze primitive, archaic, historical, and modern

13. C.J. Bleeker, "Die phänomenologische Methode," in Lanczkowski ed., *Religionswissenschaft*, *op. cit.*, pp. 225-242.

14. As a corrective, see Matthes, *Religion und Gesellschaft*, vol. I; Robertson, *op. cit.* Some stimulating ideas can also be found in H.G. Kippenberg, "Religion" in G. Otto ed., *Praktisch Theologisches Handbuch* (Hamburg, 1975), pp. 494-505; and his "Wege zu einer historischen Religionssoziologie," in *Verkündigung und Forschung* (1971), pp. 54-82.

15. T. Rendtorff, "Die Säkularisierungsthese bei Max Weber," in *Max Weber und die Soziologie heute*, (Tübingen, 1965), pp. 241-245; J. Matthes, "Bemerkungen zur Säkularisierungsthese in der neueren Religionssoziologie," in D. Goldschmidt und J. Matthes eds., *Probleme der Religionssoziologie* (Cologne, 1971), pp. 65-77.

16. Robertson, *op. cit.*, and P. L. Berger, *Zur Dialektik von Religion und Gesellschaft. Elemente einer soziologische Theorie* (Frankfurt, 1973). See also V. Drehsen, "Die Reprivatisierung des heiligen Kosmos: Peter L. Berger und Thomas Luckmann," in K.W. Dahm *et. al.*, *Das Jenseits der Gesellschaft. Religion im Prozess sozialwissenschaftlicher Kritik* (Munich, 1975), pp. 235-268.

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religion; and, in so doing, criticize Parsons' and Bellah's increasingly influential theories of the history of religion.[17] Both Parsons and Bellah outline the evolution of religious systems in five phases, following Weber's approach to the function of religion in the origins of modern society.[18] However, their work has only limited explanatory value. It remains a problematic enterprise to describe developmental stages of religious systems on the basis of their present forms by projecting them backward into the past; to compare practically incommensurable historical systems of religion; to ignore socio-historical preconditions; and, finally, to construct an ideal type of religion indiscriminately applicable to vary different social contexts. A theory of religious evolution dealing only with its logical development is inadequate if it merely provides a systematic description, without any insights into the historical process.

The specificity of Third World religions is due to the fact that these countries generally had no feudal phase and an ecclesiastically organized system of religion. Rather, through colonialism, they passed directly from archaic culture to modern civilization. In modern, pluralistic society, social and political activities no longer need religious legitimation. Religion has become just one social factor among others in a context where secularization, tolerance, and the separation of church and state have resulted in religious pluralism. Furthermore, alongside churches there are now competing "sects" and other movements not organized into churches. Thus, religion has become separable from the church, as the individual's private affair, protected but not specified by the state. Faith has come to be a free, subjective decision — a process which has readily accommodated radical religious groups. But when the church changed from a social institution serving many functions to a pure organ of faith, religion lost its universal validity. Religious interpretations then competed with secular ones. The church as an institution lost decisive social functions and, as religious systems became systems of belief, the individuals' religious practices became the system's underlying principle. Religious institutions and the religious consciousness of its members coincided only after the institutions gave up their claim to universality.Thus, whether organized or not, religion did not lose all political and social relevance. Its relevance could even increase, but, as society became more and more

17. T. Parsons, *Das System moderner Gesellschaften* (Munich, 1972); R.N. Bellah, "Religiöse Evolution," in C. Seyfarth and W.M. Sprondel eds., *Seminar: Religion und gesellschaftliche Entwicklung. Studien zur Protestantismus-Kapitalismus-These Max Webers* (Frankfurt, 1973), pp. 167-302; for the original, see "Religious Evolution," *American Sociological Review*, vol. 29 (1964), pp. 358-74.

18. C. Seyfarth, "Protestantismus und gesellschaftliche Entwicklung. Zur Reformulierung eines Problems," in Seyfarth and Sprondel, *Seminar*, pp. 338 ff.; R. Döbert, *Systemtheorie und die Entwicklung religiöser Deutungssysteme. Zur Logik des sozialwissenschaftlichen Funktionalismus* (Frankfurt, 1973), pp. 75 ff; N. Luhmann, "Religiöse Dogmatik und gesellschaftliche Evolution," in K.W. Dahm *et. al.*, *Religions-System und Sozialisation* (Neuwied, 1972), pp. 15-132; H.G. Kippenberg, "Zu einem sozialwissenschaftlichen Verständnis religiöser Weltbilder," in *Religionsgespräche. Zur gesellschaftlichen Rolle der Religion* (Darmstadt, 1975), pp. 65-94; R. Döbert, "Methodologische und forschungsstrategische Implikationen von evolutionstheoretischen Stadienmodellen," in U. Jaeggi and A. Nonneth eds., *Theorien des Historischen Materialismus* (Frankfurt, 1977), pp. 524-559.

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bourgeois and secular, religion and society ceased to be isomorphic.

Every discussion of the rise of modern culture must begin with Weber's thesis concerning Protestantism and the rise of capitalism.[19] In view of the confusing state of discussion, however, it is necessary to reformulate that thesis. Starting with the question of the ethical life style appropriate to capitalism, Weber related ascetic Protestantism and the "spirit" of capitalism, which he saw as constitutive for the birth of the modern world.[20] He defined it as an "elective affinity,"a system of interdependence; still, it is not clear just how the two related exactly since in his *Protestant Ethic* he only confronted the problem of a possible explanation of life style, and thus of modern rationality, based on the "spirit" of Protestantism. He provided no corresponding explanation for the influence or the spirit of capitalism on Protestant ethics.

This lacuna has been mentioned by many critics. But to conclude from Calvinism's close relation with capitalism that there is a one-sided causal connection between the two is to miss Weber's point. This is why Weber's *Protestant Ethic* must be read in connection with his other less known works on the sociology of religion. Weber concentrates only "on the discovery of those psychological drives created by religious faith and by the practice of religious life which pointed the way for life conduct and made the individual comply."[21] Thus, relations are not established in terms of church doctrine, but exclusively in terms of Calvinist asceticism, which gave rise to the work ethic.[22] This problem is reformulated here primarily to counteract the tendency to stylize Weber into an opponent of Marx.[23] More important is that Weber was not interested in providing any empirical proof with his thesis.[24] To this extent, attempts to confirm or refute Weber after the fact, are fruitless.[25] He was only concerned with an ideal-typical construction which offered an explanatory model for the rise of modern rational cultures in which religious development acquires a particularly crucial role.

19. Important on this topic is R. Bendix, "Die 'protestantische Ethik' im Rückblick," now in M. Weber, *Die protestantisch Ethik, II. Kritiken und Antikritiken,* J. Winckelmann ed. (Hamburg, 1972), pp. 380-394; R.H. Tawney, *Religion und Frühkapitalismus* (Bern, 1964); R. Bendix, "Max Webers Religionssoziologies," in D. Käsler ed. *Max Weber — Sein Werk und seine Wirkung* (Munich, 1972), pp. 153-176; G. Lenski, *Religion und Realität. Eine Untersuchung über den Stellenwert der Religion in einer Industriegrossstadt* (Saarbrücken, 1967), pp. 31 ff., 229 ff.; S.N. Eisenstadt, *Die Protestantische Ethik und der Geist des Kapitalismus. Eine analytische und vergleichende Darstellung* (Opladen, 1971); and Seyfarth and Sprondel, *Seminar, op. cit.*

20. M. Weber, *Die Protestantische Ethik und der Geist des Kapitalismus,* in *Die Protestantische Ethik, I. Eine Aufsatzsammlung,* J. Winckelmann ed. (Hamburg, 1973), pp. 27-278; for an English version, see *The Protestant Ethic and the Spirit of Capitalism,* Talcott Parsons, trans. (Scribner's: New York, 1930). Cf. M. Weber, "Die Wirtschaftsethik der Weltreligionen. Vergleichende religionssoziologische Versuche," introduction to *Gesammelte Aufsätze zur Religionssoziologie,* I (Tübingen, 1963) pp. 237-275.

21. Weber, *Geist des Kapitalismus, op. cit.,* p. 117.

22. Weber, "Wirtschaftsethik," *op. cit.*, p. 238.

23. Cf. the excellent analysis by H. Bosse, *Marx-Weber-Troeltsch. Religionssoziologie und marxistische Ideologiekritik* (Munich, 1970).

24. This is rightly pointed out also by Robertson, *op. cit.*, pp. 185 ff.

25. H. Lüthy's critique, "Variationen über ein Thema von Max Weber," in Seyfarth and Sprondel, *Seminar, op. cit.,* pp. 99-122, misses Weber's point.

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The rise of religious movements and sects is a central phenomenon of modern religion.[26] Troeltsch's typology of religious organizations and his differentiation between church and sects is still helpful in approaching sectarian movements.[27] But he provides only partial answers to the urgent questions concerning the rise of these groups and their role in "modern" development. Following Weber, there have been new interpretations of sects.[28] Since the peak periods of the sectarian movements in Europe coincide with the German Reformation, the English Revolution, and the beginning of industrialization, they can be seen as a result of social restructurings and the ensuing disorientation of certain social strata. Sects are symptomatic of social problems.[29] This is reflected even in the sects' internal structure, their isolation from the outside world and, especially, in their peculiar ethic. As can be seen with the Anabaptists, the first great European sect, but also with Methodism and the Salvation Army, they can be adequately understood only in the framework of the social context within which they arose.[30] Thus, sects can articulate interests of oppressed marginal groups, or they can be exclusively middle class groups which shield themselves with their social "success" or retreat from "failures." As "voluntary organizations," sects organize disoriented groups and provide a new outlook as well as a new religiously mediated identity.[31] Their adaptation to the world, which goes hand in hand with an inner stabilization, is a function of social recognition, adoption of secular norms, or engagement in the world.

Despite Weber's undertakings, the modern role of sectarian movements has received relatively little attention.[32] The sects' achievements were several. They reduced traditional norms and structures, thus contributing to group emancipation from magical thinking and demolition of hierarchic rule. Sects anticipated models of society based on equality, fraternity and tolerance. And they reintegrated socially disadvantaged strata into society while preserving their identity. This enabled such strata to participate in modernization.

Two further examples indicating the need for interdisciplinary approaches in the history of religion come from ethnology, namely, the study of

26. On the problems of sects in general see Robertson, *op. cit.*, pp. 123-158.

27. E. Troeltsch, *Die Soziallehren der christlichen Kirchen und Gruppen* (Aalen, 19620: for an English version, see *The Social Teaching of the Christian Churches*, 2 vols., Olive Wyon trans. (Harper: New York, 1960). Cf. Robertson, *op. cit.*, pp. 126 ff.

28. See B.R. Wilson, *Sects and Society* (London, 1961); and P.L. Berger, "The Sociological Study of Sectarianism," in *Social Research*, vol. 21 (1954), pp. 467-485. Cf. also B.R. Wilson ed., *Patterns of Sectarianism. Organization and Ideology of Religious Movements* (London, 1967), pp. 22-48.

29. C.Y. Glock, "The Role of Deprivation in the Origin and Evolution of Religious Groups," in R. Lee and M.E. Marty eds., *Religion and Social Conflict* (New York, 1964), pp. 24-36.

30. Clasen, *Anabaptism;* R.V. Dülmen, *Reformation als Revolution. Soziale Bewegung und religiöser Radikalismus in der deutschen Reformation* (Munich, 1977), pp. 169 ff.; W. J. Warner, *The Wesleyan Movement in the Industrial Revolution* (London, 1954); Robertson, "The Salvation Army: the Persistency of Sectarianism," in Wilson, *Patterns of Sectarianism, op. cit.*, pp. 49-105.

31. M. Weber, "Die protestantischen Sekten und der Geist des Kapitalismus," in *Die Protestantische Ethik*, vol. I, *op. cit.*, p. 283.

32. On Weber's contribution here, see St. D. Berger, "Die Sekten und der Durchbruch in die moderne Welt: zur zentralen Bedeutung der Sekten in Webers Protestantismus-These," in Seyfarth and Sprondel, *Seminar*, *op. cit.*, pp. 241-263.

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pilgrimages and millenarian movements. It was believed that religion lost all social significance with the collapse of the *ancien régime*. But pilgrimages, known in all traditional religious systems, indicate otherwise: despite the rise of secularized societies, they survived unchanged until recently.[33] Pilgrimages are paradigmatic for the changes in religious culture from the beginning to the modern age. In Europe it went from an unorganized activity to a national mass institution and combined magic folklore with devotion for the saints. Pilgrimages provide a more direct insight into the people's mentality than official doctrines which reflect primarily ecclesiastical policies. The greatest period of pilgrimage activity was in the late Middle Ages, while a second peak occurred during the Counter-Reformation, when pilgrimages were first used to restore Tridentine Catholicism. What is less known is that after the decline of religion with the Enlightenment and the collapse of the state church there followed, during the restoration of Catholicism and the Papacy, a last climatic peak which encompassed Germany, France, and other countries. Only after the middle of the 20th century did pilgrimages generally lose their attraction. The pilgrimages to Trier, Lourdes, Fatima, and Sacré Coeur in Paris, were some of the great organized mass movements of the modern age.[34]

This remarkable fact does not contradict Weber's secularization thesis. Since church and religion had lost official influence and had to adapt to the competition over world-views, the Catholic Church revived the traditional system of pilgrimages, which had declined at the end of the 18th century but was still alive in many countries. It consciously used pilgrimages to restore Catholic faith against anti-Church movements and to exhibit ecclesiastic power and stabilize within the new social conditions, a religious culture in opposition to liberalism, socialism, and modern culture. This resulted in a political power which became one of the most important factors of 19th century political conservatism. No doubt, the pilgrimages were still religious movements anchored in a Catholic rural population that had hardly changed intellectually. Yet, in both France and Germany (under the influence of the church leadership), they became means of the ultramontane Church to secure its members' loyalty, to mobilize them, and to strengthen its own power position. At any rate, after the Restoration, mainly after the mid-19th century, there was a flowering of magic cults with an intensity unknown since

33. G. Schreiber ed., *Wallfahrt und Volkstum in Geschichte und Leben* (Düsseldorf, 1934); W. Brückner, *Die Verehrung des Hl. Blutes in Walldürn. Volkskündliche-soziologische Untersuchungen zum Strukturwandel barocken Wallfahrtens* (Aschaffenburg, 1958), W. Brückner, "Wallfahrtsforschung im deutschen Sprachgebiet seit 1945," in *Zs.f. Volkskunde*, 59 (1963), pp. 221-232; and, especially, the important articles by J. Mieck, "Kontinuität im Wandel. Politische und soziale Aspekte der Santiago-Wallfahrt vom 18. Jahrhundert bis zur Gegenwart" (pp. 299-328) and M. R. Marrus, "Pilger auf dem Weg. Wallfahrten im Frankriech des 19. Jahrhunderts" (pp. 329-351) in *Geschichte und Gesellschaft (GG)*, vol. 3, 1977. Also important is V. Turner, *Dramas, Fields and Metaphors. Symbolic Action in Human Society* (Ithaca, 1974).

34. W. Schieder, "Kirche und Revolution. Sozialgeschichtliche Aspekte der Trierer Wallfahrt von 1844," in *Archiv für Sozialgeschichte*, 14 (1974), pp. 419-454; G. Korff, "Formierung der Frömmigkeit. Zur sozialpolitischen Intention der Trierer Rockwallfahrten 1891," in *GG*, vol. 3, 1977, pp. 352-383. On French pilgrimages, see Marrus, "Pilger auf dem Weg," *op. cit.*

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the Baroque age.

This phenomenon can hardly be explained by a single cause. But an analysis of the motives, the social composition of the pilgrims, and the pilgrimages' political function in the church-state struggles prior to 1848 and after the 1871 defeat in France would help. A comparison of the pilgrimage systems in France, Germany, Italy, and Poland may indicate how social minorities organized by the Church as "protest movements" were able to hold up modernization for an astonishingly long time, but finally collapsed when isolated Catholic groups were drawn into modern civilization. Liberal governments' attempts to repress church piety and group culture were unsuccessful at first and only helped to internalize traditional modes of behavior. Only when the social basis changed did pilgrimages lose their protest function.

Associated with the revival of pilgrimages was an intensification of the cult of the saints — of symbols of a new feeling of cohesion. In accord with the changed social situation, however, local cults gave way to national (or professional) ones. Examples both in France and in Germany are the cult of St. Joseph, as well as the cults of Mary and the Sacred Heart. A completely new phenomenon was reverence for the Pope after 1870, the high point of the ultramontane movement.[35] The cult of the saints was originally a general expression of feudal society.[36] This changed inasmuch as old and new cults in the 19th century retained meaning relevant only to particular groups. They were by no means apolitical and they helped shape social consciousness.

The new cults of the saints were based on tradition, but they were no longer spontaneous expressions of Catholic piety. Now they were consciously sponsored by the Church to nurture obedience in a changed society. In this fashion, the Church succeeded in absorbing the political and social dissatisfaction resulting from bureaucratization, liberalization, and industrialization. It succeeded in distracting a traditional Catholic population and in protecting them from the social problems of the time — especially working class struggles — thus leaving them with a consciousness compatible with traditional religion.

The new cult of saints propagated the ideal of virtuous, mild individuals loyal to the Church. In the cult of St. Joseph, for example, "the romantically heightened tradesman's idyll of Nazareth...is even made the model of industrial labor."[37] It suggested that social conflicts are not to be solved politically, but all solutions are to be referred to the "imaginary space of the saintly

35. W.E. Blessing, *Der mentale Einfluss des Staates und der Kirchen auf die 'kleinen Leute' in Bayern zwischen alteuropäischer und moderner Struktur. Ein Beitrag zur mentalité-Entwicklung im 19. Jahrhundert,* Diss., (Munich, 1976), p. 441.

36. Cf. G. Korff, "Bemerkungen zum Politischen Heiligenkult im 19. und 20. Jahrhundert," in G. Stephenson ed., *Der Religionswandel unserer Zeit im Spiegel der Religionswissenschaft* (Darmstadt, 1976), pp. 216-230.

37. On the Joseph-cult, see G. Korff, "Heiligenverehrung und soziale Frage. Zur Ideologisierung der populären Frömmigkeit im 19. Jahrhundert," in G. Wiegelmann ed., *Kultureller Wandel im 19. Jahrhundert* (Göttingen, 1973), p. 105.

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heaven."[38] Church leaders sought every means to keep followers not only within the Church, but also tied to traditional life styles. Controlled by pastors, religious consciousness became an effective obstacle to the abolition of pre-bourgeois forms. Yet, despite all conscious politicizing of the cult of the saints, at the end of the 19th century, the anchoring of the whole system in traditional faith was not a simple manipulative strategy. Both the Church leaders as well as the common people acted out of conviction, not on behalf of reactionary political interests.

In the politicized cult of the saints, traditional groups braced themselves against developments felt to be hostile to the Church. Whereas traditional ways of behavior were stabilized by the religious cults, the political cults initiated by the workers' movement advocated a new group consciousness. Against the traditional world, they promoted the rise of a proletariat as a class yet to be constituted. While new political cults functioned as mediating symbols for a new social consciousness, the opposite was the case with Catholic cults. It remains unclear, however, what they meant for the rise of nationalism.[39] Similarly unclear is how WWII was turned into a religious World Judgment, which provided crucial support for militaristic forces.[40]

The last example deals with the role of religion in Third World nationalist or socialist movements and their implications for the modernization of these societies,[41] e.g., the Indian Peyote-cult and the Melanesian Cargo-cult, as well as Islamic Mahdism and the Taiping-Rebellion, which attained special significance as a chiliastic rebellion. Although modern chiliasm is primarily a phenomenon of developing countries, it has appeared in Europe as well. Its spiritual roots are there, in radical forms of Christianity, such as the Hussites, Müntzer, and the radical Anabaptists.[42] Similarly, chiliastic undercurrents are also detectable in the early phases of the European workers' movement.[43]

All millenarian movements arose in traditional societies whose "natural" state was directly and unexpectedly threatened from outside: in Europe by

38. Korff, "Politischer Heiligenkult," *op. cit.*, p. 222.

39. Cf. G. Maron, *Die römisch-katholische Kirche von 1870-1970* (Göttingen, 1972), p. 252, Maron points out that cults such as that of the Sacred Heart became a nationalist symbol.

40. M. Missala, *"Gott mit uns." Die deutsche katholische Kriegspredigt 1914-1918* (Munich, 1968); R. v. Dülmen, "Der deutsche Katholizismus und der Erste Weltkrieg," in *Francia* (1974), pp. 347-376. On corresponding developments in Protestantism, cf. K. Hammer, *Deutsche Kriegs-Theologie 1870-1918* (Munich, 1971).

41. Cf. V. Lanternari, *Religiöse Freiheits- und Heilsbewegungen unterdrückter Völker*, (Neuwied, 1960); W.E. Mühlmann, *Chiliasmus und Nativismus. Studien zur Psychologie, Soziologie und historischer Kasuistik der Umsturzbewegungen*, (Berlin, 1964); M.I. Pereira de Queiroz, *Réforme et révolution dans les sociétés traditionelles*, (Paris, 1968); P. Worsley, *Die Posaune wird erschallen 'Cargo'-Kulte in Melanesien* (Frankfurt, 1973).

42. H. Cohn, *Das Ringen um das Tausendjährige Reich. Revolutionärer Messianismus im Mittelalter und sein Fortleben in den modernen totalitären Bewegungen*, (Bern, 1961).

43. E.P. Thompson, *The Making of the English Working Class* (New York, 1964), pp. 26 ff. and 375 ff.; W. Schieder, *Anfänge der deutschen Arbeiterbewegung. Die Auslandsvereine im Jahrzehnt nach der Julirevolution von 1830* (Stuttgart, 1963), pp. 180 ff. Especially important on the discussion of modern chiliasm in Europe is E. Hobsbawm, *Sozialrebellen. Archaische Sozialbewegungen im 19. und 20. Jahrhundert* (Neuwied, 1971), p. 79-138; for the original, see *Primitive Rebels: Studies in Archaic Forms of Social Movement in the 19th and 20th Centuries* (Praeger: New York, 1963).

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industrialization and in non-European countries by colonial rule and Christian missions. The restructuring of personal and directly social relations into the impersonal and indirect system of relations of the new capitalist culture precipitated a cultural crisis in which the threatened groups lost direction and reacted to preserve their social identity by reactivating traditional cults. Depending on the situation, this led either to adaptation to the new society, to the rejection of all innovation by retreating to the past, or even to rebellion against colonial rule. In any case, these religious movements articulated a new social consciousness different from that of traditional confessional religions (pilgrimages).

Messianic movements today either seek national unity or the abolition of class society. These strivings occasionally lead to the founding of sects. Which of these solutions is eventually chosen always depends on the situation and the differing experiences of the destruction of the traditional order. A precondition for an active response in the sense of renewing one's culture or assimilating foreign influences is the idea of a renewal of the earth or the return of a cultural hero. These ideas can be found in all societies influenced by Christianity, Judaism, or Islam.

Chiliastic movements cannot articulate their political and religious interests through social institutions, and they often turn into a political pacifist retreat or into an escape from history. If, however, under the pressure of adaptation to new social development, there is a "politicization" of traditional group culture, then it is possible for a legitimate religious politics to develop. Otherwise, these repressed groups can organize into religious communities which develop a solidarity to displace the destroyed blood-relations.[44] Both pacifist and activist chiliastic movements are resistance movements of repressed societies. Since their religious ideas function as symbols of new social relations, during social change, they can generate revolution, adaptation, or progress.

Clearly, with the rise of bourgeois society, capitalism and a pluralistic culture, religion has lost its former universal significance in legitimating social and political behavior. But religion continues to provide meaning in everyday life and has decisive consequences — either positive or negative — for modernization. Though this does not falsify the secularization thesis, it points to the need to pay serious attention to the history of religion if one wants to accurately reconstruct social development.

44. Cf. Pereira de Queiroz, *Réforme*, and on this the remarks of Kippenberg, "Religion," pp. 502 ff.; *Ibid.*, "Zu einem sozialwissenschaftlichen Verständnis religiöser Weltbilder," in *Religionsgespräche*, pp. 71 ff; Robertson, *op. cit.*, p. 175, did not grant a very high place to the effect of these movements.

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INTRODUCTION TO GERSHENZON

by Robert J. Brym

Mikhail Osipovich Gershenzon (1869-1925) was the leading historian of Russian literature in the first quarter of the 20th century. Yet in the West his name and reputation, let alone his work, are virtually unknown to all but specialists, as is evidenced by the fact that only one of his numerous books and articles was translated into English during the four decades after his death.[1] As one of his translators remarks, this unfamiliarity is partly a result of Gershenzon's name scarcely having been mentioned in the USSR itself after the mid-1920s. None of his writings has been published since then, and Soviet reference books, in conformity with the tenets of historical and dialectical materialism, dismiss him in a few lines as a religious and philosophical idealist. Moreover, the political and linguistic isolation of the USSR has prevented his pre-revolutionary renown from spreading westward.[2]

Admittedly, Gershenzon's approach to literary history and criticism is hardly consonant with modern schools of Western thought. Gershenzon had an obdurate and (for an historian) peculiar belief in the constancy of the human spirit. In his research he wanted to strip away the apparent variation and uniqueness of historical events and trends in order to reveal the few simple underlying laws which, he thought, govern human existence. In him view, these laws operate neither in the ideational nor material realms; they exist, rather, in the structure of individuals' sentiments. Moreover, if history can be reduced to psychology, then Gershenzon's method — George Florovsky aptly called it "imaginative psychologism"[3] — further reduces psychology to the study of posited emotional types, notably the "harmonious" and the "disharmonious." Characteristically, in *A History of Young Russia*, one of his most important

1. On Gershenzon see Arthur A. Levin, *The Life and Work of Mikhail Osipovich Gershenzon: A Study in the History of the Russian Silver Age,* unpublished Ph.D. dissertation (University of California, Department of History: Berkeley, 1968). For a complete bibliography see Ya. Z. Berman *M.O. Gershenzon: Bibliografiya* (Odessa: 1928). I believe the following list of English translations to be complete. M.O. Gershenson *The Key to Faith*, trans. Herman Frank (Macmillan: New York, 1925); Viascheslav Ivanovich Ivanov and Mikhail Osipovich Gershenzon, "A Corner-to-Corner Correspondence," trans. Marc Raeff, in Marc Raeff ed. *Russian Intellectual History: An Anthology* (Harcourt, Brace and World: New York, 1966), pp. 372-401; Mikhail Gershenzon "Foreword," in Mikhail Osipovich Gershenzon, ed. *Vekhi (Signposts): A Collection of Articles on the Russian Intelligentsia*, trans. Marshall Shatz and Judith Zimmerman, in *Canadian Slavic Studies* (Vol. II, No. 2: 1968), pp. 155-156; Mikhail Gershenzon, "Creative Self-Consciousness," in Mikhail Osipovich Gershenzon ed. *Vekhi (Signposts): A Collection of Artic s on the Russian Intelligentsia*, trans. Marshall Shatz and Judith Zimmerman, in *Canadian Slavic S ies* (Vol. III, No. 1: 1969), pp. 1-21; Michael Gershenzon, *A History of Young Russia*, trans. James P. Scanlan, in *Russian History* (Vol. I, No. 1: 1974), pp. 66-100; (Vol. I, No. 2: 1974), pp. 168-195; (Vol. III, No. 1: 1976), pp. 61-100; (Vol. III, No. 2: 1976), pp. 194-236; (Vol. IV, No. 1: 1977), pp. 42-63; (Vol. IV, No. 2: 1977), pp. 159-190; (Vol. V, No. 2: 1978), pp. 206-221; (Vol. VI, No. 1: 1979), pp. 68-109.

2. James P. Scanlan, "Introduction" to Michael Gershenzon, *A History of Young Russia*, trans. James P. Scanlan, in *Russian History* (Vol. I, No. 1: 1974), p. 46.

3. George Florovsky, "Michael Gershensohn," trans. D.S. Mirsky, *The Slavonic Review* (Vol. V, No. 2: 1926-7), p. 318.

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works, Gershenzon explained the actions and beliefs of the men who led the Decembrist uprising in 1825 as a function of their being emotionally attuned to finding external solutions to life's problems. This attitude, which supposedly derived from disharmony between their idea of how the world should be and the way it actually was, he found lamentable. Instead he wanted to see the Russian intelligentsia first undergo an internal spiritual revolution. He thus approved highly of the idealists of the 1830s and 1840s, the main subjects of *Young Russia*. They were supposedly driven by an emotional urge to achieve harmony with the world's natural order. N.V. Stankevich, a leading Russian idealist of the time and a disciple of Schelling, used to like saying that "*es herrscht eine allweise Güte über die Welt*"; Gershenzon recommended the achievement of this sense of religious harmony as the proper first goal of the intelligentsia. He held that social and political aims could be clearly defined and pursued only after such self-understanding was attained.

This theme — the primacy of self-examination and spiritual wholeness over positive knowledge and politics — pervades Gershenzon's work. His famous critique of the Russian revolutionary intelligentsia at the turn of the 20th century was based on it.[4] So was his much less well-known essay on the Jewish question, "The Destinies of the Jewish People."

Gershenzon himself was of Jewish origin. He was raised in Kishinev, a provincial capital in southwestern Russia whose population included a substantial number of Jews. There he received a Jewish primary education. His exposure to modern secular culture greatly increased when he entered the local *gymnasium*, and it continued during his studies in Berlin and at the University of Moscow.

Not surprisingly, such a mixed educational background produced in Gershenzon some ambivalence regarding his Jewishness — an ambivalence which has to varying degrees and in varying forms troubled most Jewish intellectuals in the West for the past two centuries. In Gershenzon's case this took the form of sympathy for, yet ultimate rejection of, the then rising (and, among world Jewry, subsequently dominant) ideology of Zionism.

As protrayed in "The Destinies," Gershenzon's unease with Zionism was based mainly on his conviction the Jewry is not fated to worship the idol of nationalism. The operative word here is "fated"; Gershenzon purported to see in the unfolding of Jewish history proof that a spiritual force was guiding the Jews to some loftier end. In his gloss on Jewish history he claimed to perceive the first manifestation of this force in the fact that the laws and religion of the Jews developed through 40 years of wandering in the Sinai desert, rather than, as is usual for a nation's culture, in a firmly rooted settlement. The subsequent history of the Jews elaborates that theme, Gershenzon submitted: in its eons of wandering Jewry became "the embodiment of a spirit estranged from any local creation."

In Gershenzon's opinion external circumstances alone cannot account for

4. See, in addition to Gershenzon's contributions to *Vekhi* ("Foreword" and "Creative Self-Consciousness," *op. cit.*), Arthur Levin, "M.O. Gershenzon and *Vekhi*," *Canadian Slavic Studies* (Vol. IV, No. 1: 1970), pp. 60-73.

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this. For example, when the Second Temple was destroyed in 70 C.E. the exercise of Roman power was not the sole, or even the most important, cause. Rather, "the Jewish will voluntarily and deliverately brought it about." The same may be said — or at least was said by Gershenzon — to hold true for all the rootlessness and suffering which has befallen the Jews.

To what end were these persecutions desired by the Jewish national will? According to Gershenzon it was precisely through wandering and suffering that the Jews first learned to renounce most worldly things, and especially a territory of their own. Additionally, he foresaw that in the future the Jews would (indeed, were alrady beginning to) renounce even their religion and sense of national identity. Thus freed of all constraints, material and cultural, the Jewish spirit would point the way towards, and eventually reach, that harmonious and unreflective state of existence (*byt*) which is the eventual destiny of all peoples. There lies, for Gershenzon, the ultimate explanation for the horrible vicissitudes of Jewish history, and the historical fate of Jewry.

There are several aspects of Gershenzon's argument which run counter to much twentieth-century thinking, others which offend Jewish sensibilities in particular. Outstanding among the former are Gershenzon's anti-empirical bias and his tendentiousness. There is of course no evidence which can reasonably be held to support Gershenzon's claim that history is advancing towards a final goal, let alone that the goal's contours match those envisaged by him. As in all teleological philosophies of history, it is faith, not evidence, which forms the bedrock of belief here. Furthermore, such faith demands that facts be selected and interpreted so as to support the philosophy. For example: "Agriculture is forbidden to the Jew by the popular spirit" wrote Gershenzon to support his thesis that the Jewish national aim has always been rootlessness. But this wholly ignores that the Jews were forbidden to become agriculturalists only in certain times and places; and that this prohibition was not self-imposed but placed upon the Jews by state laws. Similarly, 800 years of substantial Jewish settlement in Poland, or over 1,000 years of settlement as the majority group in ancient Israel, are not so much explained as explained away through Gershenzon's use of the wandering Jew stereotype. This is typical of Gershenzon's mode of argumentation, which prompted Viacheslav Ivanov, a Russian poet and a contemporary of Gershenzon, to accuse his friend of being "a man who refuses the usual methods of persuasion (except one, and perhaps the most effective, the beauty of vocables) and simply declares '*Hoc volo*' — this is my will, this is my thirst."[5]

Questions of accuracy aside, one must also question his insistence that the Jewish national will itself has repeatedly called forth every act of violence and discrimination perpetrated against the Jews. This is to blame the victim, stand cause and effect relations on their heads, absolve anti-Semites for all time, and

5. In Ivanov and Gershenzon, *op. cit.*, p. 391. For a detailed critique of the rootlessness thesis, particularly as it applies to intellectuals, see Robert J. Brym, *The Jewish Intelligentsia and Russian Marxism* (Schocken: New York, 1978) and Robert J. Brym, *Intellectuals and Politics* (George Allen & Unwin: Boston, 1980).

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ignore the social, economic, political, and historical roots of anti-Semitism. Although nothing in the least base motivated Gershenzon's analysis of the Jewish question, the fact remains that all his talk about Jews being responsible for anti-Semitism, about Jews having no real home in the world because of their penchant for rootlessness and cosmopolitanism, makes it difficult at times to avoid comparing certain aspects of his argument with some of the least palatable modern ideologies. The Jews themselves may be excused for having sought to change the material circumstances of their suffering by participating avidly in the Zionist, liberal, and socialist movements rather than paying the least heed to what are after all vague and far-fetched promises of ultimate salvation.

Gershenzon's essay is nevertheless of value for two reasons. First, it questions the ultimate aims of Zionism. It is sometimes forgotten that it was only during WWII that the Zionist movement became wholly politicized and accepted as official policy the need for a Jewish state. In the process, the cultural and spiritual goals of Zionism, which had been pre-eminent before the trauma of the Holocaust, receded in importance. Since then, mundane problems seem to have eclipsed the noble aspirations of the early Zionists: discussion of spiritual renewal, cultural efflorescence, cooperation and equality between individuals and nations is hardly encouraged by wars and occupations. Indeed, many commentators — including left-wing Zionists in Israel and abroad — have pointed out that current Israeli government policies concerning the Palestinians in particular are subverting those early designs, and they have called for a return to the old values and to a more accomodating stance. One must look to thinkers inside the Zionist movement, such as Gershenzon's contemporary, Achad Ha-Am, for that sort of advice.[6]

Gershenzon's essay is useful also because it provides us with insight into the thinking of some Jews caught up in the Soviet-Jewish emigration movement among whom the essay has enjoyed some popularity. "The Destinies" was first translated (into French) just after WWII,[7] and its rationalization of Jewish suffering found favor among some survivors of the Holocaust who found it difficult to react more typically to the destruction of European Jewry. Similarly, when read today by assimilated Soviet Jews involved in the emigration movement, Gershenzon's essay also fulfils an important rationalizing function: it justifies emigration by stressing that wandering and rootlessness constitute the normal state of the Jews, and it legitimizes the tendency to choose North America over Israel as a destination by emphasizing that Jews are meant for purposes higher than mere nationhood.[8] In short, the social functions of Gershenzon's essay are probably more significant than its content.

6. For an introduction see "Ahad Ha-Am (Asher Zvi Ginsberg) 1856-1927," in Arthur Hertzberg ed., *The Zionist Idea* (Atheneum: New York, 1976), pp. 249-277.

7. Michel Gherchenson, *Les Destinées du Peuple Juif*, trans. Serge Karsky (Charlos: Paris, 1946).

8. On the emigration movement see Victor Zaslavsky and Robert J. Brym, *Soviet-Jewish Emigration and Soviet Nationality Policy* (St. Martin's Press: New York, 1983).

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THE DESTINIES OF THE JEWISH PEOPLE*

by Mikhail Osipovich Gershenzon

I

An educated Englishman can live his whole life without once reflecting on the historical destiny and purpose of his people. He senses directly that his people lives as a whole and that the path of its history is continuous. But whence this path leads, and whether it is the correct one — how can one know? It is obvious that it is not within the powers of the individual mind to comprehend a phenomenon of this scope. The face of a living people is like the fiery sun: it can be seen by all, but not looked at. Only cold suns, only the dead countenances of Egypt, Greece, Rome can we endeavor to survey as a whole — and even this without great success.

Nevertheless, there is not one civilized people from time to time that does not try to comprehend itself through the minds of its thinkers. A linear scheme or outline can be inferred by observing the past: a philosophy of national history. And society greedily grasps these conjectures because they satisfy an irresistible need of consciousness — to reduce to a conceptual unity the variety of popular passions and the destiny of a people.

If even fortunate nations yield to this impatience, then how can the contemporary Jew, of all people, resist the temptation? He who believes does not need rational hope: with his whole being he receives consolation and hope from the idea of divine Providence. When the Jews' faith weakened there inevitably had to appear in its place some kind of rationalist philosophy of history. The history of the Jews is, first of all, too strange in its striking dissimilarity to the history of other peoples and, secondly, so black with sorrow that an onlooker involuntarily stops in amazement: the mind persistently seeks to puzzle out the logic and meaning of such an unusual phenomenon. As we know, many non-Jewish minds have paused before this riddle of Jewish history; how much more understandable, then, is its fascination for the Jewish mind. Man is so constructed that he does not seek grounds for his peace and happiness but accepts them as natural phenomena, but he certainly must find reason for his grief, must prove to himself the logical inevitability of his suffering. Otherwise, the world appears nonsensical and he sinks into despair. Why has the Jewish people been so severely punished by dispersion and persecution? Was there in its past some fatal guilt, or in its character some innate peculiarity, whence this monstrous succession of sufferings developed? This is the first question that naturally comes to mind — the question of understanding. It suggests itself because, unlike other living peoples, the Jews

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possess in their Palestinian past something like their own obdurate image, similar to those dead images of Egypt, Greece, and Rome — a completed process, demanding explanation. A second question, of practical importance, is even more persistent. A people's past is formed spontaneously, but it is not possible to submit its future, at least its immediate future, to our conscious will. If Jewry were well-off, the need for foresight would not be pressing. But Jewry is unhappy now, too: strewn about, homeless; fourteen million people, feeling like one family, dispersed throughout seventy countries; a people that once possessed its own culture, internally atomised among twenty foreign cultures; a people that has forgotten its mother tongue, speaking in many foreign languages; a chameleon-like people; a people of tradesmen, cut off from nature, growing sickly in the cities, everywhere persecuted, at best barely tolerated — where can such a people go? The old faith did not dare to ask about the future because this very question interfered with the intention of God. Unbelief, on the contrary, by its very nature is doomed to look ahead and to direct. But since foresight is possible only on the basis of past experience (otherwise it would be chimerical), the question of the future is reduced once again to the question of the past, and both together can be solved only by a historical-philosophical hypothesis. That is why for a contemporary thinking Jew who has lost the faith of his forefathers there is no temptation stronger than an explanatory and guiding national myth. And it is not difficult to see that all the intellectual movements which emerged among the Jews in the last forty or fifty years were in essence nothing but attempts at such myth creation. The actors themselves may not have known the sources of their inspiration, and they honestly considered their programs to be purely practical: such were, for example, the assimilationists of the 1880s. Actually, all their arguments were also drawn from certain historical generalizations, only dimly realized and therefore not reduced to a system.

It would be highly interesting to discover the foundations of these doctrines, to uncover their philosophical kernels and then construct a whole series of hypotheses, arranged according to the time of their emergence and their common goals. I am convinced that an attentive investigation would reveal in them many related features, in spite of their apparent dissimilarity. It would demonstrate that they all coincide, both negatively (having a lack of faith and historical rationalism as a common starting point) and positively (since all, without exception, represent only copies of various historical-philosophical theories which 19th century European thought elaborated for its own needs). And the strong Zionist movement, which has been growing irrepressibly for almost a quarter of a century and is now reaching its apogee, has won over all of them. Zionism is now not merely an academic doctrine: it has become the driving force in the consciousness of hundreds of thousands of people. It has turned into an emotion-laden idea. And if until now it only stirs the heart and mind, if it has not yet changed the world very much, the enthusiasm it inspires guarantees that under favorable conditions it is destined radically to affect the fate of Jewry. Any day now the main exter-

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nal obstacle will fall: Palestine will be given to the Jews, and a handful of enthusiastic dreamers will raise the ignorant masses from their places and lead them through their labors and their hardships to attempt a national renaissance. No one takes on such a responsibility unless he unshakeably knows the truth and strength of his intention. Zionism ardently believes in its dream. Whence comes this certainty? It derives from its worldview, from its philosophy of history. All concrete propositions are inferred, as a logically necessary consequence, from a general idea, and whoever wants to understand Zionism must seek its essence not in the official resolutions of the Basel or Helsingfors congresses, but in the historical-philosophical theory which animates it and fuses the different parts of its program into a unity.

But it is precisely this, the most important side of Zionism, which has been least elucidated. With Zionism there occurred the same thing that may be observed in the history of any political party: the program completely eclipsed the idea which gave it birth and thereby transformed this idea into dogma. Nobody argues about the main principles of Zionism. They are kept only as a gold reserve and, when needed, are produced *ad extra*. Since they were first formulated about twenty-five years ago, nobody has dared to reconsider them, neither with the aim of verification nor even for the sake of enrichment and simplification. They are repeated in innumerable journal articles, pamphlets, and books as indisputable axioms, in one and the same order, almost in the same words. All the intelligence of Zionism is preoccupied with tactics, all arguments are confined to program. Even the main split in Zionism did not touch its core, because even the spiritual Zionism of Achad-Ha'am does not ask whether the final goal is defined correctly: it shows only another path to the same goal which political Zionism has set for itself. This unanimity is so triumphant that a voice of criticism may appear almost blasphemous. If in spite of this I venture to express my thoughts, then this audacity derives from my respect for Zionism, from my confidence that the Zionists value the truth and the good of the Jewish people more than their own righteousness. We are as a family at the crossroads; ruin threatens our house. Where is the way out of this fatal crush? You, Zionists, have found a means of rescue, and I have unearthed a mistake in your calculations which threatens new misfortune. And since I am a member of the same family, my objection should not insult you; we have one love and one concern.

II

Zionism, as a historical philosophical theory, exhibits this peculiarity: it never speaks about the past. Its goal is not at all to illuminate the history of the Jewish people; its goal is to construct a future for the people not resembling its present. Therefore, it analyses in detail the contemporary situation of the Jews and infers directives for the future, while concern for the past remains peripheral. From the past it notes — and this without any analysis — only two or three scattered empirical facts which it needs: the indestructibility of the Jewish people, its consciousness of its unity, and the millenial prayers of the Jews for the return to Zion. But Zionism's hidden philosophy of history

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appears clearly both in its judgments about the present and in its dreams about the future of Jewry.

Zionism is based completely on the idea of nationalism. In the thought of Zionists, the development of mankind occurs exclusively in national forms; it is nothing other than the general result of national developments. There exists no creative force aside from the national; the nation is the sole genuine reality in world history. This is the first main dogma of Zionism. But the concept of the nation is multifarious. How do the Zionists define it? They think of the nation as if it were a plant. Their second dogma is this: the necessary conditions of national existence are unity and the distinctiveness of everyday life. But since everyday life is the result of collective adaptation to an external environment, then, according to the third dogma of Zionism, the unity and distinctiveness of national life are inconceivable without the territorial unification of the nation. All of Zionism is based on these three concepts, linked by causal relations: national creativity, everyday life, common territory. Everything else in Zionism is only an application of this simple doctrine to the fate of the Jewish people. Zionists reason as follows. Jewry is without doubt a unified nation; it is conscious of itself as such, and the unity of its destiny reveals that this is so. It has not yet spent its energy, as is evidenced by the talent of its various sons in the centuries of exile. Meanwhile, as a whole, it has for two thousand years remained barren. Why has this national creativity run dry? — only because Jewry does not live a normal national life. A normal national life obtains when it grows organically from the womb of a people's spirit. Since the Jews were dispersed around the world they have lacked a national life completely. The laws to which a nation is subject must be an expression of its own will: the Jews, living among foreign peoples, everywhere obey foreign laws. They do not have their own national economy. Their economic life is defined by the needs and tastes of the people among whom they live. They have lost their language; they are losing with each passing day the last remnants of their national distinctiveness: their religion and worship, their communal organization, their system of education. They are nourished by foreign literature, they imitate foreign styles, they master foreign ways of life. Jewry, as a nation, is losing its character completely. Against this effacement there is only one remedy: it is necessary to gather at least part of the Jews together in a bundle, to press this bundle into the ground and keep it pressed down until it sinks roots. Then, through the roots, living juices will rise from the soil; the stem will come to life; the national life of the Jews will again flourish; and from it a fruit will be born — national creativity. And, although there is not one nation in the world which has had such an experience, Zionism is firmly convinced that it is sufficient to plant this tumbleweed with its roots in the earth and it will start to flourish like Aaron's rod. The experiment will certainly turn out well, of this there is no doubt. It remains only to decide which place on earth is the most suitable for planting. Here, after some hesitation, the romantic dream of the Jews about returning to their ancient homeland lent a helping hand. Of course, this dream is a strong psychological stimulus and, as such,

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can to some extent promote success. But it is only one of many components. That for two thousand years Jewry has been physiologically transformed so that its organism has long ago adapted itself to other soils, climates, and tenors of life; that the old homeland remains its homeland only in the way that a seedbed is the place of origin of a grown plant or a cocoon the place of origin of a butterfly — about this Zionism does not think.

But I, too, touch upon this theme only in passing. The crux of the matter lies in Zionism's abstract formula. We must clarify two things for ourselves: firstly, whether the historical law upon which Zionism is based is correct and, secondly, whether the goal which it places before the Jews is worthy of being elevated as an ideal. I maintain that the law has been observed incorrectly and that the chosen goal is unworthy of us.

III

There is no doubt: a nation is not a mechanical conglomeration of personalities, but a certain, comprehensible individuality having one will and its own special predestination in the world. Not only do we feel this vaguely, albeit with certainty, in contemporary times, we see it quite clearly in the past, where the ancient peoples appear before us in the perfect wholeness of their essence and their fate. As a river is one in the midst of the eternal change of its waters, as a lone man is one and whole in the continuous renewal of his physical being and spiritual movement, so every people is, in history, one organism, one image, and one destiny. There exists an elemental will in the nation, and this will, in its irrespressible exertion, deposits outside of itself a sort of calculus: freakish, strictly regular forms of national being and national fate. And just as these forms are built from within, so, by the continuous movement of a people's spirit, they are indefatigably formed, destroyed, and renovated from within. Nationality is the formative, morphological principle. It defines not the essence of the historical process, but only the individual forms of its existence and its external manifestations. The national principle does not create the essence. Other forces do. It only takes part in each creation, as bile is continuously produced by the liver and influences digestion. And it does not even define the forms themselves (because the forms of human existence are identical throughout the world): nationality defines only the form of forms, that is, the species-distinctive form. The aesthetic feeling is common to all people, but it developed most among the Greeks; every man has a nose, and Romans were distinguished from other people only by the special structure of their noses. The influence of this plastic principle is so subtle, so deeply organic and mysterious, that to follow it is not within our powers.

But if it is so, if nationality actually creates neither existence nor even its forms, but only the species-distinctive form, like some mysterious force which gives form to the leaves of an oak, or gives to the nose of an elephant the form of a trunk, then it is obvious that to seize this subtle element is, firstly, impossible, and, secondly, unnecessary, because it could not become an instrument of substantial creation in our hands. Only the latter must interest us; for us, only that sphere is vitally important which the competence of our reasoned

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will can reach. It does not reach so far as to influence the national principle; therefore we do not need to trouble over it. Nationality is our eternal companion. Just as we always perceive phenomena in the categories of space, time, and causality, so does nationality determine all of our perceptions and each of our purposeful actions. A nation is not, as the Zionists assert, an authentic reality in history. But the individual is, because only the individual creates substantially, and only he is granted some freedom of choice. The national principle acts automatically and does not develop autonomously. Personality does develop so, and only in it, nourished by its integral development, will nationality grow stronger and be purified. The human spirit is not comprised of pieces; it is a unitary whole, and that is why nothing innate in it can be partially changed through conscious intent: every such effort distorts it through and through but does not attain its specific goal. The national element is only one of the innate "givens," and one must forget about it as a separate entity, although it exists and always will exist. We ought to solve each question and each problem which crops up on the basis of substantive considerations, both practical and ideal; we ought to endeavour to be a strong, free, and spiritually vigorous people — then our nationalism, which is instinctively present in everyone, will be of a higher quality. A Spaniard should simply live, not trying to live "Spanishly." Whether he wants to or not, he in any case lives "Spanishly" and thus fulfills his share of the Spanish people's "mission." But if he lives well, precisely the Spanish element in him is refined, and he serves his people all the better for not thinking about its purpose — more than this, he improves it to the limit of his ability. Because, if in reality the trajectory of a people's path is determined, then of course it will not be singular, but multiple, that is, it will have some space to move, leaving some choice to the freedom of human will.

Therefore, I say that national creativity is not some special, supreme type of collective creativity; any people's creativity, regardless of the will of its members, is nationally colored and, through this, united. Do not endeavour to be a nation: you are a nation, inevitably, in the nature of thing. And when you simultaneously assert that Jewry is a nation and that because of its dispersion all over the earth it is incapable of national creativity, then I answer: if it is in reality a nation — and I think along with you that it is — then its atomised collective creativity inevitably, in some invisible sphere, does constitute a national whole. Clouds arise not only from the sea; each stream and each puddle sends vapor into the air. A nation need not necessarily be assembled in one territory in order for its creativity to be national: it creates thusly in any case and under all conditions. The point is that Jewish national creativity as a whole is invisible, although no less real, while you insist on touching it before you will believe in its reality.

I repeat: the national element is beyond your power. A certain group of people is a nation only so long as it *is* a nation, and it ceases to be a nation regardless of the conscious will of its members. I suppose that the Jews in their totality, in spite of their dispersion, are one nation, creating integrally. What

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will happen to our nationality? We cannot arrange its fate. If it has its living forces, it will survive for a long time. If not, it will gradually be extinguished, it will be replaced in individuals by other national principles; French, Russian, or German. We can mourn its being extinguished, but nothing can be done here; in matters of such scope, fatalism is inevitable. In our homes we build stoves to fight against the winter cold, but who would think of taking measures against the cooling of a sun? When I read in the Zionist pamphlets appeals to create a Jewish national school, to revive in it the Biblical language, or to preserve Yiddish not because this, that, and the other are good in themselves, but because they are the paramount means in the struggle for the preservation of Jewish nationality, I think: these people do seriously fear that the sun is getting cold, and they are endeavouring to maintain heat in it.

IV

The first and most characteristic trait of Zionism is its lack of faith, its unrestrained rationalism, with its pretense of mission and ability to rule the elements. Our predecessors were wise to humble themselves before hidden mysteries. Contemporary reason does not know its limits; but mysteries there are. If our thought has unraveled the secret of natural selection, if it has managed to subordinate the forces of electro-magnetic waves, this does not yet mean that it is omnipotent. Zionism encroaches on that which is forbidden to reason. In this sense it is flesh of the flesh of contemporary positivism, a fact, by the way, that is directly attested to by its nationalistic-utilitarian attitude towards religion.

And, having conceived of unraveling the mechanism of nationality and taking control of it, it did not release its thought, like a bird, to fly freely through time and space. It looked meekly around, seeing only what was close, and declared its scanty knowledge to be unquestionable truth. It examined the Europe of the last quarter of the nineteenth century: it saw that all strong states were either one nation or sought to absorb whole nations. The cohesion, closeness, and independence of a nation were accepted as the highest good; in order to obtain it, no sacrifices were too costly. That this endeavour had grown out of economic struggle and was only adorning itself with the ideology of nationalism, that it was fraught with the greatest dangers and would inevitably bring about catastrophe — world war in our time — this, nobody foresaw. The unification of Germany dazzled all as the apotheosis of nationalism. What calm might was seen in this territorially and politically unified nation! Here was the ideal, here was the norm of historical existence! Attracted by this example, the Balkan Slavs arose, the Young Czech movement revived. And Zionism was enticed. It humbly repeated after its teachers: "No, there is no other path; only united physically in one place, only reformed as a territorial state, can we Jews also resume a healthy life," and wrote this formula on its banner. But enough of this. Is it true that cohabitation of homogeneous persons on one territory is the only normal form of national existence? Did England, which fuses together three nationalities, not create

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one of the higher human types and contribute richly to world culture? And is not the same thing taking place in America before our eyes? Why must I think that Jewry is living abnormally? Its life is merely distinct, different from the lives of the majority of other nations, and its creativity is also distinct. Nature is really rich in its variety of forms. Compared to the majority of plants, rooted in their places, the plants that meander their way through the seas are abnormal. Compared to the majority of living creatures, a butterfly, which is born in the shape of a caterpillar, transformed into an immobile cocoon, and only later into a butterfly completely dissimilar to the caterpillar and the cocoon, is abnormal. Also abnormal is the polyp, which bears a jellyfish, to which it is absolutely dissimilar and from whose eggs a polyp is born again; thus, in turn the polyp develops its posterity. A man who had never heard of an elephant or a kangaroo would call a beast with a soft nose two metres long or a beast with front legs three times shorter than its back legs, abnormal. Our reason arbitrarily postulates homogeneity in matters of nature, although it is quite often absent. Reason sees what it wants in the world, because homogeneity is easy to understand and dominate.

Zionism did not infer its ideal from a philosophical analysis of Jewish history, nor did it derive it from the depths of enlightened consciousness as an objective necessity. It constructed its ideal out of three false suppositions: from the mistaken conception that the future of a people is defined by their own conscious decisions; from an arbitrary assertion concerning the abnormality of the Jews' fate; and from the false dogma of the territorial-political unification of nations as the sole means of salvation. All three of these suppositions it took over ready-made from the perverted and sinful European ideology of the end of the nineteenth century. Therefore, I consider myself to have the right to say that Zionism is not a Jewish teaching but a contemporary European one, largely German. It is a complete imitation, the result of contagion.

To be enticed by the conscious nationalism now raging in Europe — what a lamentable delusion! Nationality imperceptibly defines and colors our every action, but woe if it begins to create actions by itself. National feeling is the same as each living creature's feeling of existence: it is beneficial as long as it acts organically. But just as consciousness may transform man's organic feeling of existence into egotism, outside the lawful instinct of self-preservation, peoples are subject to another sort of anxiety, which concerns the protection of their nationality. From an element present in each creation, nationality has become a self-contained and almost dominant principle; it has been recognized as a special value among other cultural values. Nations jealously guard this fantastic value against all possible encroachments, and if somebody following his own needs passes by, they attack him with arms. And when they want to rob, they justify their robbery with the pretended needs of their national task. Thus a specter has become a real force — the most wicked and destructive force of our century. People offer their real values to it as a sacrifice, and commit the greatest crimes in its name. Is it not the case that, in

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the name of conscious nationalism, Tsarist power strangled all the small nationalities of Russia; Prussia strangled the Posnan Poles; and Hungary the Slavs? Is it not the case that conscious nationalism has turned the Balkan states in the last ten or fifteen years into a brutal pack of dogs, either biting each other until half dead or, growling, licking their wounds? Is this specter not guilty also of the world war, not because it pushed people to bloodshed, but because it sanctified the war with its prestige?

For all time, nationalism, whenever it became conscious, was the worst enemy of the Jews, and, in Russia — of late also in Poland — it was even the mainspring of the oppression of Jews. Like egoism, conscious nationalism is necessarily cruel and inhuman because it is tormented by anxiety and fear of damage. All Russian laws concerning the Jews were dictated by this senseless fear: not allowing them beyond the Pale of Settlement; not allowing them entry into gymnasiums, universities, the corporate world, and the bar, so that the dominant nationality would not suffer any loss. "Jewish dominance in literature," cried the writers of *Novoe Vremya*; in Poland, the two-penny publicists invited the destruction of the most miserable Jewish shops to protect the interests of Polish trade; and, in Germany, a Jew could not become an officer, and old Hermann Cohen related with tears how he was offended at not being allowed to place his favorite students in his vacant university chair because they were Jews. Such are the fruits of conscious nationalism; in the nature of things they cannot be otherwise, just as an apple tree can bear only apples and no other fruit. Zionism bowed down before this bloodthirsty Moloch and said: "You devoured my sons, but I see that you are the true God. Be also my God; I want to serve you." I accuse Zionism of this: by its acceptance, it intensifies the evil, cursed principle of nationalism, which has cost mankind, and primarily the Jews, so many tears. Ideally, Zionism strives to add to the already existing ruthless nationalisms yet another — the Jewish. Because, if in Palestine there really does at some time emerge that specific Jewish life about which the Zionists dream, then it will inevitably take pains to remain pure, it will suspiciously look around and build a fence. You say this will not be. I answer: the whole fruit is already to be found in the embryo. Conscious nationalism cannot be other than it is by nature. By creating Jewish nationalism, you multiply the reigning evils and join the Jews to them. Until now, there inhered in the Jews, as in all peoples, only immanent uniqueness, that is, the uniqueness of a distinct religion, unique mores, etc. Your uniqueness is conscious and active; even against your will it will strive to work out an expedient plan of external defense. Because Moloch, recognized as a God, immediately demands his cult, according to his nature.

It is difficult for me to think that my words can be misunderstood. Personally, I am not at all an enemy of Zionism. On the contrary, Zionism touches me with its sincerity, its passion, its selfless devotion to an ideal which makes the old, young, and the young, the heart of humanity. One would have to be blind not to see what pain for the Jewish people, what impatience to resurrect it for a new life, inspires this movement. Strangers also sense the psychological

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beauty of Zionism; it has evoked general sympathy in the entire civilized world. But the approval of strangers is a dangerous temptation. Understandably, they are in sympathy with the new-born Jewish nationalism: they themselves are immersed in the superstition of nationalism; they greet Zionism as the solution to the Jewish question, borrowed from their own wisdom. In addition to this, Jewish grief is for them an alien grief; they cast a compassionate glance and, not entering into details, authoritatively approve the use of means which they themselves are used to employing. This is the extent of their sympathy with Jewry. That is why they are easily won over by the enthusiasm of the Zionists. I am not a stranger, not a spectator, and this matter is too serious to be placed in the grip of emotion.

V

The philosophy of Zionism is in essence myopic and presumptuous, and in content imitative. The Zionists proclaim: "We have found the cure for all Jewish grief: we have discovered what has to be done in order for Jewry to be strong and happy again." Enviable certainty! I would not undertake to define the conditions of perfection even for one of my acquaintances whom I know well, not even for myself, so unforeseeably complicated are the movements of the spirit and the concatenation of accidents. Yet the Zionists, without the least hesitation, anticipate the future of a whole people. But their boldness is understandable. The fact is that they greatly simplify the task: they want the Jews to be free and happy, not in their own fashion, but like all other people. They wish for them no special fate, but standard well-being. Zionism thinks of the further existence of the Jewish people, not in unique forms cast from the depth of its spirit, but in banal and conventional forms. Because of the peculiarity of its image and its destiny, Jewry has hitherto been an aristocrat among peoples; but Zionism wants to make it a philistine like everyone else. Thus, a father admonishes his son: "Settle down! Your contemporaries settled down long ago. We found you a good girl: marry her and enter the family business." But the son must not listen to his parents' advice. He lives stormily and in poverty, suffers deprivations and sneers. Yet, he is a genius. His parents do not understand his art; he paints such strange pictures, in which houses hang in the air and people fall down from the rooftops. And nobody buys these pictures. No, Jewry should not heed the Zionists. Its task has not yet been understood by the world but, possibly, it is fated to illuminate the centuries with its creativity. Let it live and obey the secret call of its spirit rather than the trite rules of common sense. Happiness, and even freedom, are truly not the greatest blessings on earth; there are blessings more valuable, although intangible.

Zionism is the renunciation of the idea of chosenness and in this sense is treason to historical Judaism. I will not give away chosenness for the mess of pottage known as territorial-political nationalism, in the first place because I do not believe in its curative properties or, in general, in the existence of popular panaceas. My people is unhappy, persecuted, dispersed: this does

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not make it worse than others. On the contrary, its fate is the more beautiful because it is so unusual, and I seek to understand what the features of this distinctiveness are.

A profound, complicated project and an elementary, clear plan: the main lines are so distinct that even a child is able to trace them. But each line is determined by the most delicate considerations and serves the manifold purposes of the whole. Such are the creations of great artists — and thus the soul of the Jewish people created its manifest history. In fact, the consistency of Jewish history is amazing. It seems that some personal will is realizing here a far-sighted plan, whose goal is unknown to us.

There are two slopes: from the obscure bottom to the top, and from the apex down. The rise of the Jewish people was normal. In the disorderly movement of teeming atoms there emerges a barely noticeable kernel, a vortical center — the house of Abraham, according to legend. The kernel grows, divides itself; the more it grows, the stronger become the internal forces of its cohesion. Gradually organs form themselves in coordination with the general structure; the volume of the body increases; and the differentiated whole is strengthened internally; centuries of steadfast growth pass, and then a unified, complex organism emerges. Thus, all other peoples also arose out of chaos.

But closer inspection reveals some strange features in the embryo of Jewry. A nation, like a plant, ordinarily develops in its place of origin. The winged bud, carried along the wind, settles in the earth and puts out roots. Its further growth is intimately linked to the peculiarities of its original location. The nation's physical mold, manners and morals, institutions and religion grow, as it were, from the soil, completely dependent on local conditions such as climate, surface structure, type of neighbors, etc. The Jewish people has but one clear memory of its childhood: the fact that its laws and religion developed *en route*, in motion, rather than in the usual firmly-rooted settlement. In Egypt there was as yet no nation, only the possibility of one. The nation was born in the Sinai desert, in homeless wandering. Jewry created this myth because it secretly knew even its later settled life to be impermanent. Sensing a certain volatility and rootlessness in itself, it interpreted its spiritual creations — its faith and ethics — as the embodiment of a spirit estranged from any local actuality. This is why the ark of the covenant remained the holiest relic, even within the immovable temple of Solomon. I believe that the Jewish people was correct. Not every people could have walked that path. Not every faith or ethical code could survive twenty transplantings virtually everywhere under the sun. Homelessness is congenital with the Jewish people. It resembles those floating marine plants whose roots never settle in the ocean floor.

But the people was fated nevertheless to settle and put down temporary roots, as if for the purpose of closing ranks and gaining spiritual strength. The artist had to prepare his material, as it were, before realizing his intention. He set Jewry down to grow, and allowed that rootless plant to fill up with earthy sap and bear fruit. The Jews in Canaan are just like the Egyptians in Egypt,

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with the stability, social organization and self-containment of a nation. The faith and custom that had arisen in migration grew vigorous, matured and hardened in a settled existence. Here everything favored ripening; a solicitous hand seemed to have removed all obstacles. The nation must grow stout and be filled with its spirit, like a ripe fruit full of seeds. The Jewish kingdom grew so quickly! How splendidly it blossomed with wealth, commerce, religion, worship, morality and poetry! Among all nations, Jewry was the primordial birthplace of the idea of monotheism as the people's spiritual core. When this idea had been visibly embodied in the temple of Solomon, the people was more or less ready, as if the artist had squeezed some grains of sand in his cupped hand and molded them into a solid ball: a firmly welded people, insoluble with others.

He felt that it was strong . . . and then, without further ado, raised an axe and split the people in two parts, the Israelite and Judaic kingdoms. For what men had thought was creation — the establishment of a state — proved to be only preparation of the material, no doubt boring for the artist. It was only now that real creation began (just as nature's goal is not the fruit, which man values, but the seed, which man spits out). And he was in such haste that he denied the Jews even a little human enjoyment of their prosperity. Every other people matures and then stays at a peak for a long time, sometimes for centuries, blossoming ever more splendidly and producing still richer fruit. The Jewish nation fell over the top in an instant: its whole zenith was the reign of Solomon. That is because earthly power and unity were not its purpose, but only conditions of its other, genuine design. It did not arise in order to climb to a height, establish itself firmly, and create in a settled existence the values whose embryo it contained. The destinies of Egypt, Greece, and Rome were fulfilled in this way. The Jewish people rose only in preparation for a long decline.

Thus, the inscrutable will of the people moved it from within and defined its destiny. Each individual Jew sought happiness, the Jewish leaders built a religion and a state, but all were secretly guided by the popular will, which used their labor to accomplish its own unique goal.

VI

This was a passionate, impatient will. It realized itself early and acted with feverish energy. Molding an inseparable people from some grains of sand, it then split the people from within and broke it into smaller and smaller pieces, for centuries, until it had completely atomized again. But the new atoms must be different from the original ones: the national will must be active in each one of them. It must permeate the private will of every individual, so that in attaining his egoistic desires, in the very nature of his desires and their means of fulfillment, the individual serves the purposes of the national will. This accounts for the strange paradox running through the whole history of the Diaspora: the more Jewry is broken up physically, the more it coheres internally; and vice versa — every important gain in internal cohesion is inevitably followed by a stunning blow from outside, and still greater dispersion.

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When the Israelite kingdom fell late in the eighth century B.C.E., and tens of thousands of captured Jews were settled in different Assyrian provinces, they vanished among the pagans without a trace, dissolved in the alien milieu, because the Jewish principle within them was weak, insufficiently specific. Jewry disappeared for a hundred years, during which it became a kind of retort for the heating and preparation of concentrated Jewishness. Into it a very strong reagent is poured — the Assyrian cult in the temple of Solomon under Menasseh, involuntary idolatry among the people — and in response fiery outbursts of prophecy, in which the Jewish principle rapidly gained strength and was purified in its struggle with paganism. And all is seething in the retort, because the terror of the Assyrian conquest is like a flame beneath it. Finally, in 621 B.C.E., as a result of this furious boiling, came Josiah's great reform, the proclamation of Deuteronomy, a commandment of genius in which the essence of Judaism was embodied in sound, concise dogmas for the first time. A people steeped in an essence like Deuteronomy is insoluble. But Jewry knew that it was not ready even now. It sought a means of further condensing the national essence, and to that end strove for destruction, by a series of apparent mistakes, imprudent and reckless acts. Jerusalem is destroyed, the temple burned down, the people led into exile: all this was necessary. These exiles were the second generation after Josiah's reforms. The reform had arisen from the deepest heart of Jewry, like a storm cloud from the waters of the earth; now, pouring back down upon the Jewish masses, it is thirstily drunk by them. These exiles will never melt away among the heathen.

The soul of the people needed exile; it wanted to break away from the earth, to pull up its roots. The Babylonian captivity further strengthened the Jews. Here Judaism was forged in the lightning of Ezekiel's word, and here again a national Jewish codex arose out of a homeless existence, the so-called Mosaic law. When later the people returned to their country and Ezra and Nehemiah instilled in them this harsh, exclusive law, Jewry became a kind of single body, not physically (on the contrary, it no longer needed material unity), but spiritually, as all its atoms were now saturated with one will. Not much remained to be finished after this. The nation had to be steeped once more in its pure will, the Jewish spirit had to be carried into the capillaries of everyday life. This was a psychological task most conveniently carried out by a people settled in their native land. That is why the Jews remained in Palestine for another six centuries. The majority were already dispersed; enough were left to accomplish this task. The state was in decline, always dependent on foreigners: this served the national purpose well. Finally this work too was completed. The nation which clung to the earth by threadlike roots until its fruit ripened, like a bush half torn up by the wind, no longer needed a settled way of life. The catastrophe of 70 C.E., the final destruction of the Jewish kingdom, was no external event; the Jewish will voluntarily and deliberately brought it about in the material world through its spiritual powers, at a time it found opportune. The Jewish principle, boiled and filtered for over a thousand years, was now a strong and pure infusion, and definitely ready. No other peo-

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ple has ever been so solidly unified within, so homogeneous in spirit. In later centuries the central knot had to be tightened several times to prevent the Jewish mind from merging with that of all humanity. Hence, the creation of the *Mishnah* in the second century and the *Talmud* in the fifth, or rabbinism and the *kahal* system in Poland and Lithuania in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. And this inner unity provoked consequencs in the external world, which in its turn enclosed the Jews from without and thereby did them a favor. The distinctiveness of the Jews in matters of custom and food prompted their enemies to aggravate it by creating the ghetto in the middle ages and the Pale of Settlement in Russia. Thus the spirit of the Jewish people constructed its fate both internally and externally according to a certain plan. The value of this unity in the Diaspora was not intrinsic, but purely formal. It was like a vessel in which the drops of an infusion are held, because only together do they retain their distinctive quality. If they were splashed away, they would lose their fragrance. The inner unity of Jewry was necessary to saturate the personal will of every individual Jew with the national principle.

VII

What then does the Jewish national spirit want? What is its role in the world? If the nation's childhood and youth were spent defining the will and giving it flesh, it has now had two thousand years of positive activity, long enough to warrant summing up. Zionism simply cancels these twenty centuries of the Diaspora. It says: there was no activity at all, there was an abnormal state of vegetation imposed from outside, like the torpor of a fish out of water. The Jewish kingdom fell because Alexander the Great was a brilliant commander and Rome was a great power. But, after all, the opposite would also have been possible: Darius' countless hordes did not conquer Greece, and vanquished peoples have freed themselves more than once. The dispersion of the Jews across the face of the earth is explained by the fact that in ancient times conquerors customarily took vanquished people captive. But why did the captured Jews not languish among alien tribes? Why, instead, did they thrive in foreign lands and not long for the old homeland, as might be expected, especially of the people so exclusive, whose religion was so strictly centralized around the temple in Jerusalem? Why did they spread all over the earth, and why do they migrate in throngs to this day, instead of gathering in one place of exile? No, the fortunes of nations are even less susceptible to chance than the fate of one person. I repeat: the Jewish people, like any other, created its external destiny from its spiritual core, and in this sense wandering is as normal as the ancient settled way of life. The Jewish people wanted to disperse, and therefore allowed itself to be exiled and has remained dispersed to this day. Recall that while the Jewish kingdom still existed, the greater part of the Jews were already scattered among all the lands of the East. The second temple still stood in all its glory, but the language of the Bible was no longer heard in the streets and houses of Jerusalem: all the people spoke Syrian or Greek. The Diaspora is as regular a stage in this growth as the metamorphosis

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of an immobile chrysalis into a butterfly.

My thought is so strange that I hardly dare express it: is it given to mere mortals to know the truth in such matters? I see Jewry in its long wandering possessed by one passion — to renounce everything mutable. It seems to me that all other peoples amass treasures in order to use them creatively in accomplishing their mission. The Jewish people strove no less greedily for national unity, state power and spiritual fullness, but only for the purpose of throwing off these earthly chains in the second half of its existence, only so that there would be something to throw off. It destroyed its government as a mature chick breaks the shell of its egg. It broke away from its own land and walked the earth to live homeless — painful uprootings, bleeding wounds — but this was its insatiable desire. It dissolved its unity and scattered its own fragments. It wanted to have no laws of its own, but to live according to the laws of others. Then it renounced its most precious possession, the national language. It seemed to be consciously learning self-denial: do not set store by national independence, but learn to live without it, under alien rule; do not become attached to any one place or language, for this is enslavement to the flesh. Divide and wander! Do not have anything permanent on earth, no dear treasures. Man cannot manage without earthly tools, so let all yours be temporary; learn how to change them without becoming emotionally attached. This was the will of the people and, running through them all as if they were a single organism, it grew a hard shell, enveloped the people in an invisible reserve, exclusiveness and persistence. this popular will, through its distinctiveness, attracted and assembled around Jewry the seemingly hostile forces of the external world, which, by influencing Jewry, helped it to transform itself in the appointed way. With its distinctiveness — the external symbol of the unity and unalterability of the popular will — Jewry lured the most severe preceptors, all through the Diaspora, who taught it what its inner voice consistently demanded. They all served its purpose, just as the bright colors of a flower attract insects to spread its seed. Its own secret voice summoned Titus to destroy the kingdom, the crusaders to slaughter its sons in Worms and Cologne, Phillip to expel them from Spain, and the Kishinev mob to destroy their homes. It wanted to learn, and paid its teachers lavishly. No one can say that the lesson was unsuccessful. In two thousand years Jewry succeeded in breaking the strongest chains linking man to the earth. Scarcely anything remained; wherever Jews live, everything they have is provisional: settlement, language, law, food and dress, occupations, interests, and fashions. Nothing is their own, everything is hired, no matter from whom, hastily adapted for temporary use. This is not a home, but a camp-tent, as of someone rushing towards a goal and disregarding comfort along the way.

But how hard was the lot of the individual Jew! The popular spirit compelled him towards renunciation, while his feeble heart yearned for stability and permanence. The heart needs comfort, and comfort means the graves of ancestors, one's own home, language, unbroken tradition — in short, a secure, settled way of life for body and soul. The individual Jew born in exile

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naturally wanted to put down roots in the place of his birth, and to acquire a stable way of life. Thus, there were two hearts beating in his breast, one drawn to worldly accomodation, the other angrily commanding him not to become attached to any blessings. The first voice led him to blend in with his surroundings; this is the source of the Jew's ineradicable pull towards assimilation ever since ancient times. The second voice demanded that national distinctiveness be prized above life. The whole history of the Diaspora is a ceaseless dispute between the two Jewish wills, human and superhuman, individual and national. No sooner does a small group of Jews land somewhere along the road than they begin to settle in, if not forever, then at least for a long time. To settle in means to enter into relations with the local population, adapt to its requirements and tastes. They start out timidly, yielding to worldly imperatives, then grow more comfortable, until a more or less solid home has been built. They know this is a sin and, heeding the voice of the popular will within them, guard their distinctiveness in every possible way, but at the same time betray it constantly. How many times and in how many countless places in 2,000 years have the Jews slyly tried to take root in the earth? It has even happened that they developed whole cultures of a mixed character, half of Jewish and half of native elements, calculated for long use, and created for themselves a provisionally permanent language. This happened, for example, in Alexandria, then in Spain, later in Poland and Lithuania. It was as if the popular spirit was lessening its severity, indulging mortal flesh lest it break under the yoke. The spirit allowed man to fatten on a settled way of life and gain strength, but then suddenly decided: enough! The roots are getting strong, later it will be difficult to pull them up. Then, with that Jewish distinctiveness which has survived even a settled life, it drafted a teacher from outside, whoever happened to be passing by, as long as his fists were hard — Phillip of Spain or Gonta or Yanushkevich — to shatter the Jewish home, longstanding customs, the entire Jewish structure, and drive the Jews from familiar places into foreign countries. Or, as in medieval Germany and in Russia, the spirit contented itself with having the gentile's hand give the Jew a strong shake, or toss him a short distance, just enough so that he should not put down roots. I think that this is why the Jews became a people of mobile professions, a nation of craftsmen, merchants, and tradespeople. Agriculture is forbidden to the Jew by the popular spirit, for if he takes root in the earth, man is more likely to become attached to a place and to fixed forms of life.

But the world desires just the opposite: it craves stability almost as much as actual achievement. All peoples start out homeless, and move towards greater stability; constancy is an essential mark of culture. Jewry reached its peak like everyone else, then suddenly went in the opposite direction — back to the temporary and unstable, from the strong walls of Jerusalem to mobile tents. In this sense, Jewry is anticultural: it roams among the nations like a terrible reminder and prophecy: from dust you were created, and to dust you shall return. For the world, Jewish distinctiveness was only an external coloring;

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the world hated in Jewry precisely its substance, which was revealed by that coloring — its will to renunciation, to inconstancy. And Jewry was no trifle for the world all those two thousand years. Nations followed its course with burning interest, and the more they watched, the more their gaze flared up with fear and hatred. There is a kind of eternal truth in what the Jew does, but what a terrible truth! Why must he remind me of it? It kills the will to build up the earth. And how can he live with such a truth in his soul? He is the offspring of the past, he frightens our children. Beat him, chase him out, may he disappear! And the Jewish will wanted Jews to be driven away more, more often! This is why there has been complete harmony between the will of the Jewish people and its external fate. The world thought it was punishing the Jews, while in reality it was serving them, just as it serves every will.

VIII

And so the main thing has been accomplished. Throughout the Diaspora the Jew lives provisionally, like a traveller lodging for the night. In some places (such as Central and Eastern Europe) he lives rather solidly, elsewhere (in Romania, in America) simply in a tent, but nowhere does he maintain a proper household. All the main rhizomes have been cut; the national will has left him the right to keep, or renew, only those threadlike roots without which nourishment, and consequently life itself, would be impossible. And although there would seem to be no cause to fear a relapse in this regard, the popular will continues from time to time to dig up those segments of Jewry which have become too rooted to the spot, too cohesive, and fling them, as if from spite, across an ocean or a frontier, sometimes with force enough to break the clod into smithereens. Thus it has uprooted (by the usual means, the effect on the external world of Jewish distinctiveness) more than two million Russian Jews in the last thirty-five years and thrown them across the ocean to America. Thus in the present war it has uprooted and scattered throughout Russia a million Jews who stayed too long in Poland and Lithuania. And it continually shakes up the Jews with pogroms in Russia, Romania, Morocco, and elsewhere, lest they forget themselves. Nevertheless, on the whole the goal has been reached: Jewry has no earthly city.

But it still has a heavenly city, where it feels all the more at home, or, to be more precise, an earthly image of a heavenly city. It still has religion, and all that religion has given rise to, its long-enduring feeling of national unity. This is a powerful core with a dual function, for it unites the Jews internally around one stem and at the same time forms a single strong root attaching Jewry to the earth. Every internal tie among people is also their joint external support. The national will detached the Jews from all earthly foundations except the last and most solid, which is already midway between earth and heaven. That one was left longer than the others because the Jews needed its psychological support to endure the pain of all the lesser losses. If it had not been for religion, the *Torah*, and a sense of community, the people would not have passed in close order through such tribulations. The demands that the popular will made on

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the individual were so merciless — almost superhuman — that, without a great shared hope, the Jew would constantly have despaired and been tempted to fall away from his brothers and their strange, tormenting common cause. There had to be a dazzling common ideal to provide strength for the selfless devotion of all. The Jews could overcome their earthly self only by the light of a motionless, never-setting sun, like the army of Joshua in the old days. For the pious Jew this last immobility was the irreplaceable *Torah* and united Jewry; for the non-believer at any rate the latter.

Shall I tell what I foresee? But the facts speak for themselves, like an open book. I see that the mysterious Jewish will aims to destroy this last bulwark too. It was only the most long-lasting of the temporary instruments of the national will; now its turn has come. What use is it to free oneself from the sweet habits of existence if the sweetest one of all remains? The spirit should be absolutely free, because it is motion, nothing but motion, and freedom and motion are one. The spiritual element in man wanted to curb its own destructive course, which is why it set up fixed barriers along the way, forcing itself to flow smoothly. But it is destroying its own structures. The *Torah* and the national feeling of the Jews are the last powerful barriers. As long as they stand, the spirit cannot move freely. May you have no irreplaceable treasures and no solid dwelling-place! If you have become attached to the *Torah*, break away; if you feel settled in Judaism forever, leave it: your spirit should be as homeless as your flesh. In the flesh you were once a citizen of the Canaanite kingdom, and now you are a citizen of the universe. In spirit you were a subject of the *Torah* and a citizen of Jewry: become a citizen of spiritual humanity and no one's subject. I shall leave you nothing, only your daily bread and family love, so that you may live. The Jew's mortal make-up pines and laments: "How can I, how can this mortal flesh, exhausted by freedom, take on such a burden?" And tightly does the Polish, Lithuanian, and Galician Jew hold onto the *Torah* and *Talmud*, observing the rituals and sabbath strictly, sending his sons to the yeshivah; while those in whom the faith of their fathers has expired, the Zionists, attempt to stop by external means the spiritual disintegration of Jewry: by territorial unification in the old homeland, revival of the language of the past, and the grafting of conscious nationalism.

But the popular will is indomitable. Clasp as you will to your bosom the tightly-rolled scroll of the law, it will escape your grasp, unfurl and fly up to heaven like a serpent, because your grasp has already been weakened without your knowledge. And hoops cannot bind the decomposing mass. Faith is waning irrepressibly among Jews, and because of its decline the specifically Jewish way of life in the provinces breaks up all the faster: the Zionists themselves never tire of repeating this. But they are mistaken in thinking that the assimilation of the Jews is an essentially accidental process. They ought to ask themselves whether it is not strange that assimilation has increased greatly just in the last hundred years, and is accelerating by the hour, despite the fact that the temptation to defect is now immeasurably less, owing to the Jews' attain-

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ment everywhere of equality under the law. In the days of the Inquisition a Jew was tempted to convert in order to survive; tempted to put on European clothing, eat forbidden food, and drive on the sabbath when these concessions could purchase security, and even plenty. In our enlightened age external diversity is everywhere lawful, and no longer cast in one's teeth in society. No, no external force is splintering Jewry, it is collapsing from within. The central core of the Jewish nations — its religious unity — has become decrepit, decayed. Formerly the national spirit held onto the individual Jew through a surface distinctiveness and an inner religious-national feeling; that feeling is now breaking down, and the external distinctiveness disappears as a matter of course. When the seed germinates, the pod is bound to crack.

IX

It seems to me that Jewry is now entering its last stage. There have been turning points in its history — the conquest of Canaan, the rise of the kingdom, the building of the first temple, then the Babylonian captivity and return from captivity, and finally the ruin of the kingdom and the destruction of the last temple — but no external fact in Jewish history, however significant, can be compared with that spiritual event we are fated to enact and to witness. The disintegration of the Jewish faith and the custom steeped in that faith is the greatest crisis in the history of the Jewish people since the establishment of the idea of monotheism. This crisis began long ago in individual cases; now it has taken hold of the masses, and nothing can stop it. For twenty centuries Jewry studied the lesson of physical diffusion until it was learned; now a period of spiritual diffusion and homelessness has begun, and this lesson will be more bitter than the first. The most striking peculiarity of the Old Testament God is that he loves the Jewish people above all other tribes, but for their sins punishes them unto the seventh generation. Precisely: there is no grander lot than that which fell to the Jews, but no popular will demands as much self-denial from the individual member of the nation. It is truly merciless to the individual. The Jewish God taught freedom from the senses by torturing his favorite son with lashes and scorpions, because sensual liberation can be accomplished only through the body. What horrors of pogroms, wanderings, mortal terror, humiliation, and poverty! The pain in countless hearts from Tiglath-pileser III until Kalish and Tarnopol today! He rent the body with hooks, burned it with hot iron, sparing no one — not old people, nor girls, nor infants. He tore away everything, tore away and thundered from the heavens: "O sensualist, unregenerate slave! You have warmed yourself in your lair again? Go! Cleave not to any earthly thing, let your heart be a wanderer!" Now the heart has learned to live provisionally, without a home. The first lesson is over. Without it the second, higher lesson — the freeing of the spirit — would be impossible. But this calls for a different method: the spirit is freed within itself, through inner conflict. The body will not suffer now; on the contrary, insofar as the heart accustoms itself to homelessness, the body can relax. It will not be through injustice, pogroms, exile or any outside influence that we learn the ultimate freedom. Other sufferings await the Jew. The cruelest tor-

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ments can be endured as long as the spirit has support, even just one stable point, but without a sacred object happiness itself is unbearable. The Zionists think that assimilation threatens the very essence of Judaism. O skeptics! The Jewish principle is ineradicable, insoluble by any reagent. The Jewish nation may be fragmented, leaving no residue anywhere in the world (and I think that this will happen), but this will only strengthen the spirit of Jewry. A Viennese feuilletonist-Jew, a stockbroker in St. Petersburg, a Jewish merchant, an actor, a professor — what have these in common with Jewry, especially in the third or fourth generation after breaking away? They would seem to be saturated with cosmopolitanism, or at least with the local culture: they believe in and love the same things as everyone else. But be assured: they may love the same things, but not in the same way. They borrow foreign beliefs, ideas and tastes because, first of all, one must find some meaning in life, even if this leads to deceiving oneself with a false meaning. Secondly, the baring of the Jewish spirit which began in them appears monstrous to the world; one must cover one's spiritual nakedness with something. No, they are not hypocrites. On the contrary, it is impossible to be more sincere and zealous in proselytizing. They really are devoured by a passionate desire to believe in alien gods as wholeheartedly as the natives do, for only the sort of faith which guides the consciousness automatically can provide sufficient support for action. But faith is like a child, vitally loved only by the soul that bore it in pain. For every other soul it is a value, that is, an external good, inevitably liable to evaluation. This is precisely how Jews who have defected spiritually from Judaism live. They make an effort to like what the contemporary cultured world lives by: its positivistic belief, its philosophy, science, aesthetic, democratic politics and socialism. They pretend that their liking is genuine, and even convince themselves. But this is merely a foster child, not the flesh of their spirit's flesh. The heart is empty, and the mind is too clear. Behind their noisy activity in an alien milieu, their self-confident and often complacent exterior, lies a vague anxiety. Their feverish energy derives from spiritual hunger, not wholeness. They are pursued by the furies, the instinctive terror of emptiness. I see some of this craving for intoxication in Zionism as well. But self-deception will not suffice for long. Perhaps the grandchildren of today's cultured Jews will already feel clearly an icy cold in the soul, and with every new generation the bewilderment will become more acute, the yearning more insatiable. The Jewish God is cruel. He allowed his favorite to amass great spiritual wealth in the ark of the covenent, a firm and lofty religion and an indestructable morality such as no other nation had. In those days, no matter how hard life was, the individual always came out ahead, because the national wealth repaid any individual loss with interest. And at the appointed hour he took it all away — destroyed the ark and scattered, incinerated, cheapened the treasure. There used to be an instinctive belief in the meaningfulness of life, a priceless treasure not to be replaced by belief according to Marx or Haeckel or even Bergson or James There was once a grandeur in everyday life: the synagogue and common observance of the holiday, the joyous purity of Passover, the sounds of trumpets on the Day of Atonement and, most of all, the Sabbath. The theatre and

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cinema, international Christmas tree and non-denominational Sunday will never fill their place. There will be emptiness and lack of hope, as when a homeless wanderer recalls his distant happy childhood. There will be spiritual homelessness, just as there has long been literal homelessness among Jews. I say *will be* because it has already begun. The Old Testament God's last behest to the Jew is: "Become as poor in spirit as in body!" Who can tell the purpose of this terrible teaching, or where the will of the Jewish people is leading? The scientist can tell us how a caterpillar is transformed into a cocoon, a cocoon into a butterfly, but it is pointless to ask him why the butterfly is needed in the world. We can see only the negative side of Judaism — its liberation — because this is accomplished in external forms that may be observed. But freedom is never an end in itself. The liberation of the Jewish spirit was undoubtedly accompanied, in its hidden depths, by a positive act of creation of which it was only the means, but the fruits of this creation are invisible. In truth, it was not without cause that Jewry cast away all anchors and is now breaking the last. We can now foresee with certainty that man, in Jewry, will become poor in spirit. Is not this the goal for which all humankind is striving? Loss of faith has begun not only for Jews: all ardent hearts and pure souls are sick today with the same intellectual poverty and anguish, and this infection will spread among people. I believe that all mankind goes the same way, from natural poverty to accumulation and then again to another, voluntary poverty. Jewry trod that path with special, I would say prototypical swiftness, without lingering. More than any other people, the Jews were replete with their God, and for that reason their hunger will be the more burning. Perhaps they will be the first to enter the kingdom of spiritual freedom; perhaps the last will of Jewry proclaimed itself in the words that once sounded from its depths: "Blessed are the poor in spirit, for they shall be satisfied." Satisfied with a food the world has not yet tasted, compared with which all worldly goods are as theatrical props.

Thus I read the fate of the Jews in the pages of history. Whether or not my exposition is accurate, it has one virtue: it is of no practical use. This philosophy of history does not bind the individual, but leaves him free. I maintain that nationality is an immanent, natural, divine force in man. We may therefore safely forget about it; it will take care of itself. Of the two wills struggling within us — the personal will and the will of the clan — choose to be an individual. The ethnic will is indestructable; you too should be like flint. Only in this way will you strike fire. Who is a Jew? The man in whom there operates the popular will of Jewry. How can it be known? It cannot. God sees deep into men's hearts. But how ought the Jew to live? According to his own personal bent, guided always by essential considerations. Then he will be living at full strength, and the popular will active within him will turn his steps in the right direction. You like the language of the Bible? Study it, speak it. You feel drawn to Palestine? Go yourself, but do not presume to think that by doing so you will ressurect the Jewish kingdom. A mature people is not diapered and laid in a cradle. And the Jewish kingdom is not of this world.

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THE JEWISH QUESTION IN CONTEMPORARY HUNGARY

by András Kovács

In 1945, after Hungary's liberation from the German occupation and the collapse of the old political regime, awakening Hungarian progressives faced a new challenge. Having survived the darkest episode of Hungarian history they confronted the possibility of a completely new start — although this opportunity was not the result of their own doing. Yet one of the heaviest moral, historical and even political burdens on the awakening historical consciousness was obviously the deportation of about half a million Hungarian citizens of Jewish origin who, having lived with the illusion of assimilation, became victims of the "Final Solution". This deportation — apart from the active participation of a minority — was passively accepted by the surrounding majority.

Between 1945 and 1948 the issue of Jews and their persecution was the focus of journalistic debates.[1] Not long after these debates began, however, they came to an abrupt end. For approximately fifteen or twenty years after 1948, the Jewish question became practically a taboo subject. Then, from the mid-1960s on, there again appeared sporadic, mostly literary publications which dealt with the problematic historical relation of Hungarian Jews and the surrounding society.[2] Since the early 1970s, historians have dealt with the

1. For a comprehensive bibliography of writings between 1945 and 1958 about the persecution of Jews during the years 1938-1945, see Arthur Geyer: *A magyaroroszagi fasizmus zsidóüldözésének bibliográfiája 1945-1958,* published by MIOI (Magyar Izaeliták Országos Irodaja — the National Office of Hungarian Israclites: Budapest, 1958). Representatives of almost all significant political trends have contributed to debates about the responsibility for the persecution of Jews, the causes of the Jewish question, etc., after the war. On behalf of communists, see Molnar Erik: *Zsidókérdés Magyarorszagon* (*The Jewish Question in Hungary*: Tarsadalmi Szemle, 1946); Horvath Marton: "Zsidóság es asszimiláció "(*Jewry and assimilation:* Tarsadalmi Szemle, 1946/7); on behalf of social democrats, see Horvath Zoltan, *Hogy vizsgázott a magyarság* (*How did the Hungarians Do*: Budapest, 1945); on behalf of the Peasant Party, Jozsef Darvas was the first to write an article in one of the first issues of the Communist Party newspaper, the *Szabad Nep,* with the title: "Oszinte szot a zsidokerdesben!" ("Let's talk openly about the Jewish question"), quoted by Péter Várdy, *Befejezetlen mult — mai magyar zsidó valoság* (*Unfinished Past — Present Hungarian Jewish Reality*, in manuscript). Probably directed by short-range political considerations, Darvas defends workers and peasants against Jews who, allegedly, wanted to get rich without working and capitalize from their suffering by making unjustified demands. Accusations on the other side are formulated in a passionate and often extreme way by the paper *Haladás,* edited by Zsolt Béla, who sympathized with the bourgeois radicals. The fact that the question could be discussed without political bias and with a full moral and historical sense of responsibility is proved by the already classic study of Istvan Bibó, "A zsidókérdés Magyarországon" (*The Jewish Question in Hungary*, Válasz, Oct-Nov. 1948), republished in Bibó, *Harmadik ut* (*A Third Course,* London, 1960). All further references will be to this edition.

2. On the literature about the Jewish question after 1948, apart from the bibliography by Geyer, see also Várdy, *op.cit.,* who mentions a bibliography compiled as a continuation of the one by Geyer but which has remained in manuscript form: György Landeszman, *A magyarországi fasizmus zsidóüldözésének bibliográfiája 1959-1965* (*The Bibliography of the Persecutions of Jews by Hungarian*

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subject more frequently. It is striking, however, that works on the subject discuss almost exclusively the history of Hungarian Jews before the war, especially the period of the persecution of Jews. There is hardly anything about what happened after 1945. Even if the Jewish question had survived post-war society merely as a blurred scrap of memory in the depths of social consciousness, the long silence about 1944, the road leading up to it and post-war developments would have been a burden on the historical and political consciousness of present generations. But this is not the case.

What, exactly, is the Jewish question? This has been the subject of lengthy discussions. It is not necessary, however, to retrace these debates to understand the nature of this question. It is sufficiently defined by an everyday experience: in Hungary Jews and non-Jews remain separate from each other; they remain aware of their Jewishness or non-Jewishness, and distinguish their "reference groups" accordingly. Publicly, of course, there is no such thing as a Jewish question.[3]

According to the popular argument, the Jewish question has remained alive in Hungary, largely due to the absence of a healing discourse.[4] This, however, is not the case: silence in 1950, 1956 and 1980 covered different things in each case. Historians explain the rise of the Jewish question in modern times in terms of the distorted development of Hungarian capitalism. But these historical causes were eliminated, along with capitalism, after the war. Since the Jewish question remains alive to this day, it is reasonable to ask whether new causes have not replaced the original ones.

I

Before 1945, Jews formed a distinct group in Hungary. As social historical analyses have shown[5], Jews were disproportionately represented in the middle-classes in relation to the overall proportion of Jews in society. The level of education and urbanization of Jews differed significantly from other social strata. Jews had different career aspirations, cultural values and the lifestyle of the "genteel middle-class".

After 1945, with the demolition of the old system, the social status of Jews changed radically. Nationalization, the liquidation of the old political system and later the radical transformation of social structure as a result of rapid

Fascism, Budapest, 1976). See also *Encyclopedia Judaica,* Vol. 8, pp. 1088-1110 (Hungary, Jerusalem, New York, 1971), and Ivan Sanders, *Tétova vonzalmak. Zsidó témák a kortársi magyar irodalomban (Wavering Sympathies: Jewish Subjects in Contemporary Hungarian Literature), Uj Látóhatár* 5/1975.

3. As many have pointed out, the notion of "Jew" can define various social groups depending on the issue in question. See Bibó, *op.cit.,* p. 258. Since in the present study we deal with the relation of Jews and their environment, all those who are considered Jewish by their environment or by themselves belong to the category. See also Victor Karady and István Kemény, "Les juifs dans la structure des classes en Hongrie: essai sur les antecedents historiques des crises d'antisemitisme du XXe siècle," in *Actes de la Recherche en Sciences Sociales,* June 1978, No. 22, p. 38.

4. See György Száraz, *Egy elötélet nyomában (On the Track of a Prejudice:* Budapest, 1976), p. 277.

5. See Karady and Kemény, *op. cit.* The following charts are especially relevant: No. 7, p. 42; No. 6, p. 41; No. 5, p. 35.

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industrialization eliminated the special strata to which most Jews belonged. With the liquidation of the private economic sphere, most Jews lost their means of existence and had to find a new place in society. On the other hand, new fields were opened to them that had been closed before the war, e.g., in the political system, state administration and the army. Jews who had lost their former status during the great social transformations or who tried to exploit new opportunities, may have preferred certain positions in the new occupational structures. This, however, did not lead to a homogenization similar to that of earlier times because their place in the social structure was no longer defined by *coercive* conditions that forced them *as Jews* into certain positions as had been the case under capitalism.

In the decades after 1945, however, not only did the borderlines within the occupational structures become blurred but the different life-styles of Jewish and gentile middle classes increasingly lost their sharpness. In the 1950s, there was a homogenization because of a general levelling through a lack of alternatives — i.e., a "negative" homogenization took place — but from the 1960s on a "positive" homogenization began as life-styles became increasingly determined by the norms of a "consumer society". Of course, this did not involve a complete uniformity of life-styles since they often incorporated elements of the old life-styles.

At any rate, those factors which defined the place of Jews in pre-war Hungary partly disappeared, or were significantly weakened. Secondary factors such as intra-group marriages and informal relations may have gained in significance for group identity after the war as a result of the 1944 experiences. But something that had been expected after 1945 did not occur, i.e., Jews, having had their illusions of assimilation brutally frustrated, did not react to persecution with a self-conscious isolation. The Jews who remained in Hungary continued to seek assimilation.

The sparse Hungarian literature on the subject acknowledges the problem, but can produce only weak arguments to explain it: e.g., "...the last generation of Leventes [a para-military youth organization functioning between 1928 and 1944] has now only reached its prime of life;" or."there are also retrograde traditions,...operating under the surface;" or "young generations even here...cannot be immunized against spiritual bacilli;" or "even here, during soccer games there are supporters throwing beer-bottles, alcoholics in pubs and hooligans in side-streets;" or "among Hungarian Jews there can be some who generate stupid or malicious generalizations by their individual behavior," and the like. Even the author of the most honest study published in Hungary on the Jewish question[6] repeats well-known platitudes about the survival of anti-Semitic raditions and the disreputable elements sustaining them, despite the fact that he probably did not find anti-Semitism and abuse of Jews solely among pro-fascist ex-youngsters and alcoholics in pubs. Moreover, he seems to know well enough that the Jewish question in Hungary today is largely a problem of the intellectual and middle classes.[7] There are

6. See Száraz, *op. cit.*, p. 271.
7. *Ibid.*, p. 276.

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hardly any attempts to attribute the stubborn persistence of the Jewish question to social and political changes after 1945. Yet, almost four decades after the war, it is increasingly in this direction that the explanation should be sought. The main reason for the re-emergence of the Jewish question is that in the decades after the war, originally separate Jewish and non-Jewish groups reacted to social changes and political events in significantly different ways. In a context unfavorable to the healing of old wounds, these different reactions reflected a separate Jewish and non-Jewish consciousness.

II

In post-war Hungary, the confrontation of non-Jews and Jews who had just returned from extermination camps, or were released from the ghettos, could not possibly have been smooth. The unavoidable question was: were the active participants in the persecution of Jews the only ones responsible for the deaths of approximately half a million Hungarian Jews, or were the passive majority also guilty? Was there national responsibility, given the fact that masses of Hungarian citizens who had considered themselves equal members of the nation were declared outcasts and suffered violent deaths? The debate in post-war Hungary was emotional and influenced by the short-range political considerations extensively analysed by Bibó: Hungarians turned out to be incapable of a dispassionate discussion of the question of responsibility.[8] While the demand for accountability slipped into heated accusations proclaiming the "total responsibility of the fascist nation" and calling for collective repentence, defensive reactions led to declining any responsibility and even to a new anti-Semitic demagogy about "Jewish thirst for revenge" and "lust for power". Ironically, both parties felt justified when, one and a half years after the end of the persecution of Jews, anti-Semitic acts occurred again in Miskolc and Kunmadaras.[9]

Moreover, Jews and the surrounding society reacted in different ways to liberation and the end of the war.[10] The appearance of the Soviet army in Hungary liberated the Jews, regardless of their social strata or their attitude towards the Communist regime. The same cannot be said for the rest of society. "I and other surviving Jews had to accept it: we were saved from certain death by Soviet soldiers and no one else. This experience, however, separates rather than unites us with the rest: they probably reacted in different ways to the fact that it was the Russians who brought liberation. They might have welcomed it but could also have considered it a national tragedy; they might have felt ashamed that they could not achieve it themselves, but those less

8. See Bibó, *op.cit.*, pp. 330ff. On the debates, see Száraz, *op.cit.*, p. 249 and pp. 257ff.; and Várdy, *op.cit.*

9. The 1946 anti-Jewish activities which resulted in five deaths were also reported in the contemporary press. Cf. *Encyclopedia Judaica, op.cit.*, Vol. 8, pp. 1105-1106.

10. See Bibó, *op.cit.*, p. 344; László Márton, *Zsidó sors, zsidókérdés a háboru utáni Magyarországon. Esmék nyomában (Jewish Fate, Jewish Question in Post-War Hungary*: Hollandiai Mikes Kelemen Kör, 1965), p. 130. François Fejtö, *Judentum und Kommunismus* (Vienna, Frankfurt, Zurich, 1967), p. 83. Ágnes Erdélyi, "Eltorzult kozmopolita alkat" (*Distorted Cosmopolitan Character*: Bibó-Emlékkönyv, Budapest, 1980).

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ashamed might have pondered whether it might have been better if not the Russians but the British or the Americans had come. We had only one way of reacting to it: we were alive because the Russians *did come*."[11]

Of course, the end of the war and the expulsion of the Germans and of the Hungarian Fascist Party meant liberation not just for Jews. Some of the vast political measures taken during the first year after the war were considered liberating by many other groups: this was the case with peasant organizations regarding the distribution of land, the activity of national committees, the response to the first nationalizations and the relatively high number of votes for left-wing parties during the 1945 elections. Nevertheless, for non-Jews, the experience of liberation was combined with that of losing the war and its consequences: the confrontation with an occupying army, the taking of prisoners of war, and the loss of territories inhabited by Hungarians. For Jews, liberation and the loss of the war cancelled each other out. This immediately implied a conclusion regarding the rest that created an "us" and a "them": "...all I want to say is that I was liberated in 1945, and immediately it occurred to me that because of that I could not have anything to do with those who lost the war in '45."[12] Similarly, for non-Jews, anyone who does not consider himself a loser in this war is an "alien" having nothing to do with the cause of Hungarians. This readily explains why Jews wanted to put the whole nation on trial for war crimes. Some Jews even felt that those who had lost the war would have willingly sacrificed the remaining Jews for a more favorable outcome.

Although conflicts were sharp and the tone passionate, there seemed to be hope for reconciliation since the reason for confrontation originated in the past and was fueled by the past. This expectation proved to be false, and the past remained continuous with the present. Between 1945 and 1948, and more fully after 1948, a new factor intensified the political outlook of Jews and non-Jews: the attitude towards the Communist Party, communist ideology and the new regime.

III

The new post-1945 version of the Jewish question has been explained in terms of the fact that Jews held a disproportionately high number of positions in the new regime.[13] Although probably true, this is difficult to document and, at any rate, it explains very little. As has been pointed out, it is rather the fact that a society is preoccupied with this sort of thing that needs explanation.[14] The phenomenon itself can be readily explained. First, the new administration badly needed competent people who had not been implicated with the pre-war regime. Obviously, large numbers of persecuted Jews fulfilled these conditions. Second, new professions opened up for them in the army

11. Erdélyi, *op.cit.*
12. *Ibid.*
13. This argument appears in almost all writings on the subject, regardless of their tendency. See, e.g., Ervin Gyertyán, *Szemüveg a porban* (*Glasses in the Dust*, Budapest, 1975), p. 389; Fejtö, *op.cit.*, pp. 74ff. and pp. 83ff.; and Várdy, *op.cit.*
14. See Bibó, *op.cit.*

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and in the state administration which had been open primarily to the upper middle class. Jews had been formally excluded from these occupations up through the Horthy regime. Undoubtedly, in this system of selection the criteria of reliability and earlier persecution might have helped many people into positions for which they would otherwise not have been suitable.[15]

The relation between Jews and communist ideology, however, was not defined primarily by these new openings. This relation was influenced by the post-war situation. Notwithstanding some demagogic anti-Semitic features of party propaganda meant to win over the masses considered to be anti-Semitic, a significant number of Jews interpreted the message of party ideology to mean that identification with communist ideals paved the way for a new promising possiblity of assimilation.[16]

Before the war, Hungarian Jews seeking assimilation wanted to become equal members of the nation. Therefore, they sought to incorporate the dominant national ideology. The craving for assimilation did not end with the collapse in 1944 of the illusion of its having already been achieved. But the national ideology could no longer serve as the basis of assimilation because the Hungarian nation had not defended its Jews.

After 1944, joining the Communist Party was a way to survive the shock of the failure of assimilation and the resulting rootlessness. As someone wrote in his memoirs, "...How could I cope with the idea that my people were hated in this country — or at least that they had still been hated yesterday? How could I cope with the indifference even worse than hatred with which the country had noted their annihilation and forgave me that I survived? I did not cope with it: I was not strong enough to face the bare facts. It was better for me to...believe that by eliminating social injustice, by liquidating class oppression, anti-Semitism would also disappear. I had no doubt that I had to become a communist. I knew that a new society ... would put an end to parasites and exploiters."[17]

Communist Party ideology simply cast the Jewish question and anti-Semitism among the crumbling institutions of a declining world. The Jewish question was a product of the capitalist mode of production and anti-Semitism was the ideology aiming at lessening the tension of capitalist class antagonisms.[18] "Put an end to capitalism and you will have put an end to the Jewish question". In a popular novel, *Glasses in the Dust*, a communist protagonist of Jewish origin vulgarizes Marx for purposes of agitation as follows: "Marx says that if we do away with bills of exchange, we also do away with Jews.[19] "For a Marxist," according to the same novel, "...the Jewish question as such does not exist. Jewry is not the question, but anti-Semitism is. There is an anti-Semite question."[20]

15. *Ibid.*, p. 344. This phenomenon is also discussed by Várdy, *op.cit.*
16. On the working class movement as a context of assimilation, see Bibó, *op.cit.*, p. 323. On the relation between Jews and the Communist Party, see Várdy, *op.cit.*
17. Judit Márványi, *Köszönet helyett (In the Place of Thanks)*, Budapest, 1980).
18. See Molnár, *op.cit.*
19. Ervin Gyertyán, *op.cit.*, p. 139.
20. *Ibid.*, p. 373.

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This argument was so attractive for those involved not only because it placed the Jewish question into the past, among the hallmarks of an unjust and declining society, but because its prospects provided important psychological relief for its adherents. In the future society not only Jews would no longer suffer discrimination, but what is more, general human emancipation would eliminate all particular forms of integration. As the hero of *Glasses in the Dust* states: "I do not believe that the mere fact of belonging to a nation or a people gives dignity to a man. This is a nationalist, fascist concept...I believe, that the concept of man stands above people, nation, race or religion...Every people and nation receives dignity from man, from humanity and not the other way round".[21] Thus, as a consequence of unsuccessful attempts of assimilation, the previously accepted mode of integration is placed into a historical perspective. In the process of general emancipation, the nation and its ideology, i.e., nationalism, vanishes together with Jews through the trapdoor of history. These prospects promised not only an end to the threats that all kinds of nationalism have meant for Jews but also offered historical exemption for the failure of assimilation.

The prospect of a classless society was also important in another aspect: it relieved its Jewish followers of guilt over the one-sided class stratification of Jews. "We do not want to be a privileged or a buffer class anymore," declares the leftist Zionist hero of Gyertyán's novel,[22] who argues for emigration to Israel and absorption into the working class there. "Why should an intellectual working in socialism and serving the people belong to privileged strata," his communist opponent says, enumerating the doctrines: "...socialism ...eliminates all privileges, even the privileges of intellectuals, by creating equal opportunities for everyone. The children of workers and peasants can become intellectuals. These intellectuals, however, no longer stand above the people. On the contrary, they serve the people. And to become one will depend only on abilities, not origins."[23]

In exchange for creating a society that eliminates the Jewish question, anti-Semitism, national isolation, nationalism and all kinds of class stratification, the Communist Party demanded complete identification with the "movement". To comply with this requirement involved almost total self-abnegation from Jews of bourgeois-intellectual origins: they had to divest themselves of their previous identities — all suspicious "bourgeois remnants". This must have been an enormously difficult task. Yet, Jews who sought relief from past wounds and who hoped to find a new identity in communist ideals wanted just that: they could achieve their goal — get rid of everything that was "Jewish" — in a way that at the same time involved a new identification and a new community that accepted them: the "movement". "I allowed them to relieve me of the burden of mourning, or rather my right to my own mourning. I wanted to identify with the communist collective united

21. *Ibid.*, p. 377.
22. *Ibid.*, p. 386.
23. *Ibid.*, p. 387.

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in the ideal of communism," recalls Judit Márványi.[24] Though its ideological motives were similar, this identification was not quite the same as that of Jews involved in the illegal Communist Party. It was not the identification of what Max Weber called a "pariah folk" with a political movement that promised salvation but was just as persecuted as they were. There was more to it: this time relief from stigmatization was offered by a dynamic party and ideology seizing power and holding a dominant position. And this assimilation raised no bad memories, it did not entail the adaptation of an "alien" minority to a ruling majority. Jews and non-Jews, "we are all children of an unjust and deformed society, and one way or another we all bear its marks upon ourselves. So we all have to assimilate to a new human ideal, if you like. We all have to transform into socialist men", or so proclaims the Communist hero in Gyertyán's novel.[25]

Of course, there were significant differences in thinking, attitudes, culture and temperament among those who hoped for this new possibility of assimilation. They looked for the new identity in many different ways. The alternative chosen by the young communist militant who visited villages organizing cultural evenings and thus hoping for liberation from the rule of "evil madness" was only one of them. The other extreme was the party secretary, personnel man or security official who could only think in terms of fire and sword to realize the newly found ideals in the midst of a "fascist people". Typical of this is the communist headmaster in György Moldova's novel, a former Jewish resistance fighter who wants "to drink fascist blood" after the war and who is a little disappointed because he feels that his true place would really be with the police or with the state security forces and who considers it the duty of every Jew not merely to be a silent sympathizer but a relentless militant in the new regime since, as he explains to his reluctant protegé, "...if this regime is overthrown, they will not take it into consideration that you only wanted to be a meek scholar. Murderers are not in the habit of deliberating too much; you get the same rope as if you had lead a courageous and resolute life..."[26] Various motives could have driven this type of functionary who would have employed any means for the sake of achieving his ends. There were some who joined the repressive forces simply out of revenge after the war and were carried away to more and horrible deeds. Some were driven by a fanatic identification with ideals believed to be absolute and superior to anything else, to accept or commit unbelievable absurdities and inhumanties. If, by chance, doubts arose, they cast them aside by the increasingly ruthless performance of superiors' orders that imperceivably but increasingly replaced great ideals. Only through total acceptance of the most absurd tasks, accusations and ruthless measures were such Jews able to disperse doubts concerning their origin, careers, and "bourgeois remnants", i.e., the still incomplete identification with the "new". Though this attitude was not typical of functionaries of Jewish

24. Márványi, *op.cit.*
25. Gyertyán, *op.cit.*
26. György Moldova, "Elhuzódó szüzesség" ("Prolonged Virginity",) in *Kortárs*, No. 11, 1980, p. 1750.

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origin and not even of the majority of Jewish communists, it still defines the image of the Jewish communist of the 50s in the common consciousness of prejudiced non-Jews and guilt-ridden Jews.

More attention should be paid to other phenomenon, however, which though less spectacular than the participation of Jews in the Party leadership or in the repressive forces, was at least as important in influencing the relation of Jews with their environment in the 50s. This was a detachment from reality typical of people who suddenly converted to communist ideals after the months of persecution. The acquisition of ideals that promised relief from the heavy historical burden of the Jewish question was so intense that only very few had enough energy left to examine their reality. The day-to-day experience of melting into the collective gave credence to the goals proclaimed for the far future and hid the reality of the present. As Judit Márványi recalls in his memoirs: "I did not notice that the village was not so happy when we invaded it on Sundays...I did not notice because I did not want to notice: I thought it was temporary, the effect of hostile demoralization...Behind the applauders, did I not see the bitter, hostile face of the working class? I watched those who were enthusiastic toward me...With our eyes fastened on truth, we admitted from reality only what justified us."[27]

Thus a new vicious circle developed. Jews and non-Jews confronted each other in a context that reinforced the old split. For Jews the new political regime meant something that it could not have meant for others and the intensity of this experience easily blinded them to the latter's problems. Non-Jews now started to talk about the "Jewish thirst for revenge" and "Jewish power". In prejudiced generalizations they declared that they considered the ruling political regime alien and rejected it.

The specific Jewish attitude towards the Communist Party or the political regime after 1948 did not take the form of an articulated Jewish consciousness, for its source was the conviction that this new identification would immediately and forever eliminante all oppressive isolation. If it became conscious at all, then it was only as an accident of personal history on the road leading to the Party. According to the protagonist of Gyertyán's novel: "...I could not hide even from myself that my denigration as a Jew also played a part in my social radicalization and social sympathies".[28] In retrospect, however, the content of this peculiar identification is partly cleared up by well-known cases during the 60s and 70s where, after disappointment in great ideals, the disillusioned were left with nothing but a re-discovered, reluctantly accepted, completely empty yet nostalgic Jewish consciousness as the somewhat narrow basis of self-identification. The headmaster from the previously quoted novel who thirsted for fascist blood later comments: "I sacrificed a life to get to where I started from...For thirty years, the world hammered in my head that I was *only* a Jew and I resisted with all my might and now, when the pressure has ended, should I accept it voluntarily? I am glad that I remember

27. Márványi, *op.cit.*,
28. Gyertyán, *op. cit.*, p. 140.

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some sentences and old festivals from childhood,...when I find myself imitating gestures of my poor father".[29]

Yet, Jews who sought a new kind of assimilation or simply new career possibilities in the post-war political regime were only a small part of Hungarian Jewry. The fact that, unlike other social groups, this group established a specfic relation to the political regime does not make the generalization valid for all Jews. To see how the early "fifties" — the era of Stalinism — had a different meaning *in general* for both Jews and non-Jews, one has only to examine the group of Jews for whom the post-1945 political changes resulted in the loss of livelihood, new threats and fears, i.e., the ones whose objective situation was not different from that of other similar social groups.

In some quarters and, of course, in right-wing political literature, a stereotype recurs that considers the years up till 1956 a period of Jewish political rule.[30] Yet, as Bibó already pointed out in 1948, the fact that Jews came into important positions of power after the war implies no special advantages for Jews. Indeed "...some Jews, persons who suffered from the persecution of Jews, Jewish organizations or Jewish concerns have the occasionally bitter experience regarding their minor and fair demands that power holders of Jewish origin show no readiness whatsoever to take up these causes as Jewish ones even when these causes have no relation to state policies or they are not contrary to them."[31] Far from being an advantage, being Jewish exempted none from "disadvantages": in the course of the nationalizations the evaluation of Jewish enterprises was no different from others, bourgeois Jews lost their livelihoods just as non-Jews, and their offsprings were deprived of the opportunity of higher education exactly like other members of their class. Moreover, 30% of all deportees (20,000 people) were Jewish.[32] This was probably more than 10% of the Hungarian Jewry at that time.

This, of course, had nothing to do with any political tactic seeking to avoid the accusation of "Jewish solidarity." Jewishness could not serve as a basis for solidarity between Jews inside and outside power: admission to the new elite meant breaking with a Jewish consciousness which was as forbidden as any other deviation from the Marxism-Leninist paradigms. This was particularly bitter for left-wing Zionists who considered all labor parties, and the Communist Party in particular as political allies after liberation.[33] It has even been reported that membership in the Zionist movement, which was summarily liquidated after the war, was filed under the same heading as former fascist party membership in the records of personnel departments.[34] Although with less significance than in the Slansky trial, the charge of Zionism also appeared in transcripts of the Rajk trial,[35] and the arrest of the president of the Jewish

29. Moldova, *op.cit.*, p. 265.
30. See David Irving, *Uprising!* (London, 1981).
31. Bibó, *op.cit.*, p. 349.
32. Fejtö, *op.cit.*, p. 84; *Encyclopedia Judaica, op.cit.*, Vol. 8, pp. 1106-1107.
33. On the dissolution of the Hungarian Zionist organization and the trial of its leaders, see *Encyclopedia Judaica, op.cit.*, Vol. 8, p. 1106, and Márton, *op.cit.*,, p. 141.
34. Márton, *op.cit.*, pp. 147ff.
35. *Rajk László és társai a népbiróság elött* (László Rajk and his accomplices in the people's court), (Budapest, 1949).

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community as well as of the head consultant at the Jewish hospital in 1953 indicated that waves of the Soviet "anti-Zionist" doctors' trial (terminated after Stalin's death) reached Hungary as well.[36]

Most Jews were not any better off during these years than other people. From the viewpoint of their reactions, however, their recent memories of 1944, and not their subsequent privations were decisive. The terror they faced under Stalinism did not threaten them with systematic extermination and they were affected by it not as Jews but as class enemies, bourgeois elements, etc. Moreover, an iron-handed, Soviet-controlled dictatorship could guarantee that the era of pogroms could never return. All this did not turn them into active supporters of the regime. Yet, they feared any political crisis. This became most clear in 1956.

As with all violent historical events that have resulted in radical changes, 1956 has a real history as well as one that lives in people's imagination. The sharpest difference between these two histories may belie just how much anti-Semitism was involved in the 1956 events. Countless unverifiable stories about anti-Semitic manifestations, anti-Jewish actions, threats, beatings and lootings circulated in Jewish circles and even found their way into literature. The hero of Agnes Gergely's novel, *The Interpreter*, actually considers 1956 the final proof of the impossibility of assimilation: "most people behaved like ostriches: they thought that if they did not know themselves who they were, the outside world would not know either. A greengrocer became an engine fitter; on Sundays he drank beer with his pals in the park and for ten years he had the perfect, unclouded feeling of equality. Then, in 1956, they wrote on the wall of his house: 'Ikey kike! You will not escape Auschwitz this time!" Then, he fled the country".[37]

It may have been this kind of fear that chased 20,000 Jews[38] over the border in 1956. But first and foremost, it was the fear, not the experience. There were surprisingly few anti-Semitic manifestations during the 1956 uprising. According to the few available documents, among the unfolding political aspirations there were no anti-Semitic ones — not even within the most conservative groups. In this respect, the most reliable information is in official Hungarian records which use all available data to prove the extreme right-wing character of events. These sources list 21 anti-Semitic manifestations between October 23 and December 31, 1956, primarily in the country's most backward areas.[39] Probably, further "abuse" and "everyday anti-Semitism"

36. Márton, *op. cit.*, p. 147 ff.
37. Agnes Gergely, *A tolmács* (*The Interpreter:* Budapest, 1973), pp. 51-52.
38. *Encyclopedia Judaica, op.cit.*, Vol. 8, p. 1107.
39. See *Ellenforradalmi erök a magyar októberi eseményekben* (*Counterrevolutionary Forces in the October Events in Hungary*), *Magyar Népköztársaság Tajékoztatási Hivatala*, Vol. X, pp. 41, 45, Vol. IV, pp. 70-78. *Antiszemita jelensegek es zsidoellenes attrocitasok a magyarorszagi ellenforradalom idejen* (*Anti-Semitic Phenomena and Anti-Jewish Atrocities during the Hungarian Counter-Revolution*). The source of this information is the "Memorandum" (*Emlékirat*) issued by the National Office of Hungarian Israelites (Magyar Izraeliták Országos Irodája-MIOI) compiled by Endre Sós, president, and Dr. Jenö László, chief secretary. *Ibid.*, Vol. IV, p. 70. The MIOI "Memorandum" seems to have listed all cases that could be documented in any way since it is clear from the text that one of the main reasons for compiling the document was to justify the high number of Jews among the refugees in 1956. Out

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appeared on the streets of Budapest and in country towns. At the same time, however, it was often the street itself that intervened against such manifestations.[40]

It is an interesting question as to why anti-Semitism played a much smaller role in 1956 than it could have been expected on the basis of bad traditions, the role of Jews in the Party and in the repressive apparatus, and the previously mentioned attitudes. Many Jews anticipated the worst, though these anticipations turned out to be unjustified. Still, they influenced and distinguished the reactions of the majority of Jews to what happened in 1956 from those of other groups.[41]

Given the stereotypes formed in the 50s, it does not follow that while non-Jews unanimously opposed Stalinism as a terroristic regime forced onto the country by an alien power, Jews became Stalinism's active or passive supporters. Collective reflections provide an inadequate basis to draw conclusions about political behavior. Besides, such conjecture is also contradicted by facts.[42] At any rate, a difference in Jews' and non-Jews' reactions appears immediately after 1945 in connection with the implications of liberation, the question of responsibility, etc., and it prevails even after the coup: joining the Communist Party promised something to Jews that it did not promise to others — a personal solution to the torturing problems of identity. A minority took advantage of this promise while the majority, who were affected by the Stalinist regime just like any other group had, on the basis of their historical experiences, ample reasons to fear the loosening of the status quo. Non-Jews obviously had no reason to fear this. Developments during the 50s, therefore, resulted in different and differentiating reactions that kept the Jewish question alive.

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of the 21 events listed, two were committed against religious institutions: in two cases, the actions probably had no anti-Semitic motives but were armed robberies of which the victims were Jews; in at least two further incidents it is likely that the Jewish origins of the victims was not the primary cause of the attack; in two cases the person or persons insulted were defended by the population of the village. The "Memorandum" registers one single anti-Semitic manifestation in Budapest, the credibility of which, however, is rather doubtful: allegedly, there was a list compiled about Jews in Ujpest. Two other religious community sources report five further violent anti-Jewish manifestations in Szabolcs County. See Lászlo Harsanyi, "Adalekok a hajduvárosok zsidoságának történetéhez," in *Évkönyv* (*Almanac*) 1973-74 (Budapest, 1974), Quoted in Várdy, *op.cit.* Sporadic anti-Semitic remarks in the course of the October 23 demonstration are reported by one of the interviews conducted with hundreds of refugees by the Columbia University Research Project on Hungary. (Interview No. 207, p. 3, quoted by Bill Lomax, "Az értelmiség forradalma vagy a munkásoké" [A Revolution of Intellectuals or Workers?] in *Magyar Fuzetek,* No. 9-10.) On the unsuccessful attempt to found the Arrow-Cross Party, see Bill Lomax, *Hungary 1956* (London, 1976), p. 35. David Irving, *op.cit.,* argues that one of the main motives of the October uprising had been the outburst of anti-Semitism, but can only quote a single CURPH interview to justify his statement. He provides several quotations to illustrate the underlying anti-Semitism of the 1950s, however.

40. See *Ellenforradalmi erök a magyar októberi esményekben, op.cit.,* Vol. IV, p. 73; and Márton, *op.cit.,* p. 149.

41. See Fejtö, *op.cit.,* pp. 86ff.

42. See, e.g., the leading role of Jewish intellectuals in the anti-Stalinist movement. In the days of October 1956, the Jewish religious community dismissed its former compromised leaders and its revolutionary committee called for support of the revolution by the international Jewish public. See Márton, *op. cit.,* p. 151.

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IV

In the 60s, the context in which social issues such as the Jewish question arose had fundamentally changed. The consolidating post-1956 regime no longer exerted power by means of campaigns that ruined everyday life and created permanent insecurity but by means of a predictable, institutional logic. This relative stability enabled people to plan their lives and work out longer-term strategies. The tension that Jews had experienced during the 50s also eased, regardless of their position in the social hierarchy. The composition of the ruling elite had changed radically: most of the compromised functionaries of the pre-1956 regime had to leave and the new political leadership saw to it that the number of Jews in leading positions did not exceed certain proportions. First and foremost, however, the selection mechanisms were reformed. The composition of the elite was determined by different criteria which were applied through different institutional means than had been the case under Stalinism.

On the other hand, the aspirations of the Jews who remained in Hungary after 1956 also changed. What had led them to join the regime no longer attracted them, partly because the promise that by overturning the world the roots of the Jewish question would forever be eliminated had not been fulfilled. Also, by the mid-60s, the new generation confronted the Jewish question in a way different from that of their parents. They knew of fascism only from stories, since they had been children in the 50's. In the 60's, Jews generally realized their expectations in intellectual professions and middle-class positions in Hungarian society. Yet, the mechanism of segregating reactions remained even after 1956. The reasons for this did not change: Jews and non-Jews reacted differently to certain political changes.

The present Hungarian political system cannot be accused of political anti-Semitism. Jews are not afflicted by systematic disadvantages compared to other social groups. But elsewhere in Eastern Europe during the past twenty years a new form of Jewish consciousness has emerged due to a reactivated political anti-Semitism, above all in the form of "anti-Zionist" campaigns in countries such as Poland and the Soviet Union. Hungarian Jews reacted to this not with an active solidarity but, as so many times before, out of fear. If in a country with a similar system anti-Semitism could become official policy and this policy encouraged underlying anti-Semitic sentiments, then no institutional guarantees can prevent this from also happening in Hungary. This fear was only strengthened by the Eastern European countries' support of the Arabs in the Middle East conflict. They feared that this foreign policy might also encourage a Hungarian "anti-Zionist" policy. That such forces existed was proved by their unsuccessful public appearance in early 1973.[43]

43. Early in 1973, during a conference dealing with cultural policy issues, a member of the foreign affairs department of the Central Committee of the Party, using an unusually harsh tone, attacked the cultural policy of the second part of the 60's for exhibiting "compliance" with Zionism. (The criticized examples of "Zionist content" were the staging of the musical "Fiddler on the Roof" and a Chagall exhibit in Budapest.) The attack was voiced at the peak of the campaign within the Party against the "reform policy" of the late 60's and it is likely that it reflected not

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V

Other reasons for the re-creation of the Jewish question bear no similarity to the ones discussed. Now Jews and non-Jews responded differently to some "external" challenges. Jewish consciousness is characterized by how it reacts to the existence of the Jewish question. In the decades after 1956, just as in the 50's, most Jews sought relief from the burden of the Jewish question by silence. This silence, however, was different from that of the 50's: it brought no relief. It was accompanied by the permanent awareness of being silent, some vague tension, uneasiness about the fact that there is *something* to be silent about. Interesting data about this are provided in a series of interviews conducted unofficially in Budapest a few years ago, in the course of which fifty Jewish intellectuals were asked about the present meaning of the Jewish question. Although most of those interviewed (most of them between the ages of 20 and 40 years old) had grown up in the belief that the Jewish question was "obsolete," forty-four of them had been uneasy about being Jewish until they reached adulthood. Only 20 percent of the participants were willing to speak unreservedly about the subject. The participants did not talk about the Jewish question at all at their workplace; at best they talked about it only with other Jews; only seven of them had ever raised the subject with non-Jews. A typical error shows, however, how serious they considered the subject: only three of those interviewed knew how many Jews lived in Hungary; forty-three of them greatly overestimated the number.

This silence indicates that Hungarian Jews do not want to develop a separate group self-consciousness and, consequently, it is almost impossible to characterize Jewish consciousness in Hungary. To the extent that such consciousness exists at all, it contains hardly any active elements of its own history, culture or national identity. Among those interviewed, persecution was the only vivid factor of Jewish history they could identify, and only 16 of them felt some vague, obscure nostalgia for a lost culture of which, however, they had no knowledge. None of them felt any special loyalty towards the state of Israel; none of them wanted to live there and several were critical of Israeli domestic and foreign policy.

If the sample of those interviewed had been more representative, probably the results would not have been so unanimous. The ideological vacuum of the 70s, which stimulated several religious and minority "rebirth" movements, may have had some effect on Hungarian Jews. Yet this would not have fundamentally changed the picture: Jewish consciousness in today's Hungary is basically empty: it is simply the consciousness of being different. This difference is perceived by most Jews as discrimination or as pressure. A majority of those interviewed had a Jewish spouse[44] and most of their friends were Jewish. Most of them regarded this as a coincidence. "In Jewish families there

only the personal view of the speaker but that of a certain group inside the apparatus. Nevertheless, its first public appearance ended in defeat: the speech was sharply criticized at the conference and subsequently the speaker was removed from the Party center to an insignificant diplomatic post.

44. This, incidentally, could have resulted from the fact that the sample of the interviews was not representative.

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is a belief that one should pick a Jewish spouse because otherwise they throw your Jewishness in your face at the first row," says one of them. If it turns out that an acquaintance is a Jew, that "primarily means some relief, some security, the feeling that in this case I do not have to fear any 'attacks,' spiteful remarks." These statements are typical: Hungarian Jewish consciousness today consists mostly of this kind of reactive self-identification, interspersed with obscure fears.

The most difficult question is obviously: what image do non-Jews have of Jews in present-day Hungary? It is not only difficult but almost impossible to answer this question because there is even less material available than exists for the reconstruction of Jewish consciousness. One account of this holds that the image of Jews fostered by anti-Semites is not based on experience but is pure projection.[45] With the development of modern society and the dissolution of traditional communities, the borderlines that enclosed Jews as an "alien body" have disappeared so that generalizations about Jews as a whole can no longer be made.

From the previous discussion it is clear that the present analysis is more inclined to accept István Bibó's view on this issue. According to Bibó, even modern societies can develop features that separate Jews and non-Jews. This has no racist implications.[46] According to Bibó, encounters of Jews and non-Jews take place in a context where both parties appear in determined roles. What non-Jews perceive as identifiable "Jewish behavior" is the role Jews are forced into in the course of interaction with non-Jews by a distorted social organization. The same holds for the attitudes Jews identify as the general behavior of non-Jews towards Jews. "These misleading experiences gain a collective, social significance not in their incidental, isolated occurrence but when at some point of social organization . . ., due to some organizational contradiction, hidden falseness or prejudice, people enter into social intercourse in such a way that they repeatedly and permanently acquire these misleading experiences about each other."[47]

Bibó describes three broad generalizations about Jews widespread in prewar times.[48] The first is a traditional sense of ethnic difference typical of peasant societies that consider Jews an alien ethnic group — often without hostility. The second view is burdened with anti-Jewish prejudices that can range from anti-Jewish resentment through prejudiced generalizations about "Jewish characteristics" to the ideology of anti-Semitism that "attributes com-

45. J.P. Sartre, *Reflexions sur la question juive* (Paris, 1946). The same view is held by Leszek Kolakowski, *Der Antisemit in Mensch ohne Alternative* (Munich, 1960), pp. 159-169; Ferenc Feher, "Istvan Bibó and the Jewish Question in Hungary: Notes on the Margin of a Classical Essay," *New German Critique,* No. 21, 1981; and Miklós Szabó, "Nemzetkarakter es resszentiment" ("National Character and Resentment"), *Vilagossag,* June 1981.

46. Feher, *op.cit.,* p. 37.

47. Bibó, *op.cit.,* p. 273.

48. Cf. a personal letter from Istvan Bibó to Gyula Borbándi regarding Borbándi's book about the populist movement, summarized in Borbándi, "Bibó Istvan és a népi mozgalom" ("Istvan Bibó and the Popular Movement"), in *Uj Látóhatár,* Sept. 1980, pp. 155ff.

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pletely fantastic collective actions, an ability for collective actions, collaboration and behind all these a world-wide conspiracy to Jews."[49] And the third is that of Dezsö Szabó and László Németh, according to which a large-scale Jewish and German assimilation is a harmful process endangering the survival of the Hungarian nation insofar as it destroys the substance of the nation.

As sociological surveys conducted in the mid-60's in the villages and in the early 70's in the cities have shown, Jews are still seen as a separate group. Anti-Jewish prejudices are strongest in the lowest occupational strata and among those with little education; they diminish as one moves up in social level.[50] Unfortunately, these surveys do not detail the nature of this discrimination. As sporadic sources indicate, the core of the Jewish image is constituted by two types of traditional prejudices. The first type is the prejudiced rationalization of social tensions. Its targets are mostly people in a higher level in the social hierarchy. Angry feelings against people in power and beneficiaries of privileges take an anthropomorphic form in the persisting hostile picture of the lazy, slick Jew who lives comfortably without working and attains high positions by means of obscure contacts. "Here anti-Semitic remarks are somehow used in a political sense, anti-Jewish manifestations are intended as anti-communist ones," says a Jewish manual worker in one of the interviews.

The second type of prejudice is basically a result of rivalry and the focus is on "Jewish solidarity." In Hungary today this is the result of the fact that after 1956 the difference between Jews and non-Jews had a special function: it became a selective mechanism for the distribution of positions. In modern societies a professional career is legitimated by a competence formally certified by educational institutions and distributed among competing candidates according to formal criteria. Of course, the decisions of bureaucratic institutions are also influenced informally by career lobbies.[52] Thus, in spite of formal equality, in France the degrees of the "grand écoles" are valued more highly than those from other universities. Similarly, in England, going to Oxford or Cambridge provides better career possibilities than degrees from other universities. These lobbies can also be organized on the basis of national or religious loyalties.

In Soviet-type regimes the formal criteria governing professional careers are not homogeneous. Institutionally acquired expertise is only one criterion and not even the most important. Social origins, reliability, membership in political or other organizations, etc., can also play a role of criteria, sometimes

49. *Ibid.*, p. 155.

50. Mária Márkus, "Büszkeség és elöitélet" ("Pride and Prejudice"), in *Valóság,* April 1976; Peter Józsa, "Ideológiai áramlatok városi ifjuságunkban" ("Ideological Tendencies among our City Youth"), in *Világosság*, March 1979. See also Ágnes Havas, "Nacionalista hatások gyermekeinkre" ("Nationalist Influences on our Children"), in *Társadalmi Szemle*, March 1967; Béla Horgas, "A film és Közönsége" ("The Film and its Public"), in *Valóság*, September 1966.

51. See Zsolt Csalog, *A tengert akartam látni* (*I Wanted To See the Sea,* Budapest, 1981), pp. 202ff.

52. See Szabó, *op.cit.*, p. 361.

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even in a formally codified way.[53] Under these circumstances, personal associations play a great part in professional success, as do recommendations and contacts. There are two general prerequisites for the formation of career lobbies: a relative stability that allows for planning longer-range strategies and the existence of groups with some sense of collectivity.

In Hungary after 1956, both conditions existed. A wide variety of factors underlying group identity served as an organizational basis for developing career lobbies. The two kinds of group consciousness that have been sustained and reproduced since 1945 by divergent reactions to political situations could thus become a basis for the formation of career lobbies during the period of consolidation. To be Jewish or non-Jewish can imply both advantages and disadvantages in certain situations depending on whether in a given field, if these lobbies have emerged at all, one or the other is dominant. When such is the case, the mechanisms of lobbying continually reproduce negative confrontations between Jews and non-Jews. As Miklós Szabó put it, a career lobby needs an enemy for its cohesion.[54] The reason for this is that it is hard to justify its existence and possible failures even to itself. The existence of a rival group serves this purpose best. Career lobbies always consider themselves defensive in character: for non-Jews it is the answer to "Jewish cohesion," for Jews it is self-defense against anti-Semites. Thus a vicious circle develops and becomes an important factor in the reproduction of the Jewish question in Hungary.

Another aspect of the Jewish question that Bibó called "characteristically Hungarian"[55] has also reappeared: cultural anti-Semitism. It was primarily directed against the "alien element" which, in its desire to assimilate, corrupts the "nation" from within. This kind of anti-Semitism is a direct consequence of the characteristically Eastern European nationalism: cultural nationalism.

Cultural nationalism is the outgrowth of a national development where the criteria of belonging to a nation are not primarily formal (e.g., citizenship), but the nation is defined mainly by criteria such as language and cultural traditions, i.e., the "national character."[57] Evolving usually in multinational states such as the Hapsburg monarchy, or created by movements attempting to unite an ethnic group divided by state frontiers into a nation (e.g., the Italian Risorgimento in the middle of the 19th century), this national con-

52. See Szabó, *op.cit.*, p. 361.

53. The existing system of nomenclature in East European countries even makes the consent of political organs a formal condition for the filling of certain positions. See Thomas Löwit, "Y-a-t-il des États en Europe de l'Est?" in *Revue Francaises de Sociologie,* Vol. XX, No. 2 (1979), pp. 431-466.

54. Szabó, *op.cit.*, p. 361.

55. Borbándi, *op.cit.*, p. 156.

56. *Ibid.*, p. 157.

57. Eastern European and Hungarian historical nationalism had already been described by Bibó as a cultural nationalism. See his "A keleteurópai kisállamok nyomorusága" ("The Misery of Small Eastern European Countries") in *Harmadik ut, op.cit.*, pp. 113ff. On the historical types of nationalism and the position of Hungarian nationalism, see Jenö Szücs, *A nemzet historikuma és a történelemszemlélet nemzeti látószöge (The History of the Nation and the National Point of View on History* Budapest, 1970), pp. 14-22.

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sciousness is typical of a "threatened community." "There is a permanent threat that an alien influence can divest the nation of its original character and shape it in another way. In these communities the sense of national identity is cramped. An image of the enemy, compared to which the community feels its identity strengthened, belongs organically to the ideological composition of national character. The image of the enemy of the nation is provided by alien nations organized into other states. In the case of the development of national cultures, however, the alien ethnic groups, which disintegrates national character, is sought inside its own community. According to the visions of spasmodic fear, some . . . infiltrating alien ethnic group pretending assimilation is the enemy that disintegrates the national character to shape it in its own disguised image."[58] The cultural anti-Semitism of Szabó and Németh is obviously the consequence of this nationalism, and the reason for the existence of this anti-Semitism up to now is that the cultural nationalist tradition is still alive in Hungary.

The transformation of Hungarian nationalism after 1945 is beyond the scope of the present analysis. Yet, two elements are relevant: first, problems of independent national existence are still legitimate in Eastern Europe and, second, there are still significant Hungarian minorities living within the territory of states with other ethnic majorities. Thus, no special justification is necessary if national consciousness concentrated on what kind of autonomous political institutions are necessary to define collective national interests and what kind of institutional guarantees are needed for the preservation of the national identity of Hungarian minorities living in neighboring states. But these questions are not raised or, at least, not in this fashion. Discussions of the national question in institutional-political terms are rare in Hungary since it cannot be discussed meaningfully without dealing with the relationship with the Soviet Union. Similarly, prying into the absence of institutions which guaranteed minority rights would lead directly to the question of the absence of an institutional system that generally guaranteed all particular interests, and not only national minority ones. Thus, for reasons of censorship and deeply internalized self-censorship, the national question in Hungary today is mostly formulated not in political but in cultural terms, maintaining continuity with cultural nationalism.

Cultural nationalism is not necessarily a negative thing, and it has often been progressive. Problems start when existential questions of national culture are *directly* identified with questions of national existence. For example, dangers arise when low birth-rates or the deterioration of the language are directly related to the vision of the death of a nation, when the relation between the cultural and economic-political presuppositions of national existence are left out of consideration. In this case, the concept of nationhood cannot be separated from irrational interpretations. The kind of nationalism that ignores institutional aspects of national existence and cannot formulate

58. Szabó, *op.cit.*

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threats to the nation can easily resort to the notion of a "nation-destroying alien." It is easy to see in the background of all this the image of the prolific gypsy gradually outnumbering the dwindling Hungarians or that of the Jew "forcing" abstract thinking, frivolous life-styles or wanton political radicalism on them and destroying their language. Present cultural nationalism can thus coincide with pre-war cultural anti-Semitism.

Of course, today's advocates of cultural nationalism are not anti-Semites. One cannot even say that anti-Semitism is a direct consequence of cultural nationalism. It is only that the ideology of cultural nationalism is conceptually open to these conclusions since it has no inherent safeguards against such consequences.

Historical encounters of Hungarian nationalism and Jews after World War I were generally negative. Jews immediately suspected anti-Semitism behind any kind of nationalism and were insensitive to those issues of independent national existence always so important in Eastern Europe. On the other hand, these suspicions were not always unfounded. This vicious circle is still being reproduced in Hungary.

Does the existence of the Jewish question also imply anti-Semitism in Hungary? Generally, the undeniably vivid prejudices against Jews do not necessarily involve anti-Semitism. A prejudice, on the level of the individual, becomes anti-Semitism if it is formulated in generalizations and if it demands sanctions. Anti-Semitism becomes political when being Jewish entails disadvantages systematically sanctioned by rules, written regulations or institutions, or if political forces take steps to institute such sanctions. In present-day Hungary, there is no political anti-Semitism and there is no way of telling how many of the people with prejudices against Jews are anti-Semitic. Nevertheless, these prejudices are the first step on the road to anti-Semitism and can be easily mobilized in political crises as anti-Semitism. This is well known by Jews from their historical experiences.

VI

The evil logic which has reproduced the Jewish question in Hungary has not been broken after 1945. Modern developments in Hungarian history, such as the peculiar Hungarian nationalism, left Jews with a choice: if they chose to be Hungarians, their Jewishness could only be religious. Hungarian Jews accepted this alternative and followed a course of mass assimilation. This assimilation, however, remained superficial and its failure resulted in a deep Jewish identity crisis.[59] After 1944, Jews could not close their eyes to the fact that they had been only seemingly accepted in society and there was no other way of remaining Jewish in any sense other than religious.[60] The situation is awkward: while politics, society and Jews alike insist on the barely reformulated thesis of assimilation, the historical background has shifted and all

59. This is interestingly analyzed by Várdy, *op.cit.*

60. Bibó, "A zsidókérdés Magyarországon" ("The Jewish Question in Hungary"), *op.cit.*, pp. 310-313.

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parties are aware of the fact that the old recipe is inadequate. In the literature discussing the Jewish question, two alternatives are elaborated. The most widespread one before and after the war is rooted in the spirit of assimilation.[61] The other, more recent view, however, searches for a solution that would relieve tension caused by the Jewish question by making it possible for Jews to acknowledge a Jewishness more substantial than in the religious sense without, however, risking being labelled "cosmopolitan" or "alien."[62]

It is difficult to tell which of these alternatives will be followed, and it is even more risky to determine which of them is the more desirable. At any rate, even the question is hardly acknowledged. Jews and non-Jews still distinguish themselves from each other, but they do so with a guilty conscience. Silence, however, does not resolve problems. Indeed, as Mikloas G. Tamás writes,[63] this silence reigns over a confusion that refuses to acknowledge not only the past, but also the present, thus engendering uncertainty and fear of the future. It is hopeless to advise Jews to become more Jewish or less Jewish, or to advise the others not to be upset if Jews want to remain Jews or if they want assimilation. The problem is that no one is able to formulate goals and effectively pursue them. In this situation, what is needed is not a change in position, but finding them in the first place. Not only is the Jewish identity problematic but so is the non-Jewish one. In other words, all social groups in society lack self-consciousness. Public discussion may help, but talk alone does not solve anything — not even the Jewish question.

61. Two representative literary examples of this view are the play by Gyula Illyés, "Sorsválasztók" ("Choosers of Fate") and the relevant parts of the memoirs of István Vas, *Miért vijjog a saskeselyü? (Why Does the Vulture Scream?*: Budapest, 1981), pp. 170-181.

62. See Miklós Tamás, "Republikánus elmélkedések" ("Republican Reflections") in *Bibó-Emlékkönyv* (Budapest, 1980). This view is also preferred by Várdy, *op.cit.*

63. Tamás, *op.cit.*

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FROM PIUS XII TO JOHN PAUL II*

by Giuseppe Chiarante

The Church at the End of the Pacelli Papacy

Over twenty years have passed since December 25, 1961 when Pope John XXIII decided to convene the Ecumenical Council in Rome by the end of 1962. The Council had already been announced in January 1959, but this set the time and accelerated preparations for it. There is no need to stress how during this twenty-year period the changes resulting from the Council have had a profound effect on the organization of the Catholic Church, its culture, the elaboration of its doctrines, and its relation to the social and political realities of our time.

At the time of Pope Pius XII's death, the Roman Church seemed to be on the defensive. It was an institution grounded in papal authority, afraid to move out of its outdated doctrinal heritage and its traditional Western and Eurocentric image, and unable to confront contemporary problems. The only exceptions were superficial moves meant to provide a more modern image to its actions and teachings. Behind this was the failure of Pius' attempt, at the end of WWII, to reestablish hegemony, or at least a stronger Catholic presence, by building a "Christian Europe."

That attempt was based on the Pope's and the higher ecclesiastical hierarchy's conclusion at the end of the war that they could finally reconcile modern democracy, the Church's interests, and Catholic socio-political principles through the diffusion of Christian-Democratic parties. This development was favored by the power vacuum in many countries resulting from the fall of Nazism and Fascism. These parties seemed able to compete with both traditional bourgeois parties and Marxist-inspired socialist and communist parties. Thus, in the eyes of Vatican authorities, Christian-Democratic parties seemed viable means not only for protecting and strengthening the Church and for controlling the threat of communism and "atheist materialism" but also for correcting the "crudities" of capitalism and realizing a socio-economic order more compatible with Catholic doctrine. The governmental role of Christian-Democratic parties was thus the project of a "little Carolingian Europe," as the first effort for the reaffirmation of Catholic hegemony on the continent.

In reality, that choice soon became a pure and simple case of taking sides which attached the Church and the Catholic world to the capitalist West and its system of political, social, and economic alliances. This came about at the

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beginning of the Cold War and was driven by the obsessive anticommunism which became dominant in the highest Vatican circles as early as 1946. Catholic Europe thus ended up becoming nothing but Atlantic Europe; Christianity was identified with Western civilization; the marriage of religion and politics became once again very close; and the condemnation of atheist communism (reinforced by Pius XII's decree of excommunication in 1949) served the interests of capitalism, imperialism, and colonialism. But it was precisely this identification of the Church with a specific social and political side that condemned Pope Pacelli's line to failure.

At the time of Pius XII's death, the resulting damage was already evident, even in terms of the presence of the Catholic Church in the various parts in which the world was and is divided, especially in those countries which at the end of the war had fallen under Soviet influence. Pius XII's policy toward Eastern European countries had been that of the "iron curtain" and of the "Church of silence." In practice, that meant refusal to recognize new social and political realities in the implicit hope of a collapse of communist regimes. This resulted in extremely difficult relations between the center of the Church and Catholic organizations in those countries. By 1958, it was clear that that policy had reached a dead-end. For example, the 1956 events in Poland and Hungary had shown that there was still some freedom of initiative in places like Poland, where the Church tried to reach a *modus vivendi* with the new regime without compromising its own positions and principles. This was the meaning of the dialogue between Cardinal Wyszynski and Gomulka. On the other hand, there were disastrous consequences for positions such as those of Cardinal Mindszenty in Hungary, which were closer to Pope Pacelli's line, but which ended up by intensifying the conflict and by identifying the Church with the most reactionary positions favoring social restoration pure and simple.

In Third World countries, Vatican policies had resulted in the identification of the Catholic Church with colonial powers. At a time of growing liberation struggles against colonialism and imperialism, this resulted in growing difficulties for missionary activities. Even in Latin America, where Catholicism had long been the dominant religion, the strongly Eurocentric character of Pope Pacelli's Church was a heavy drawback. It identified Catholicism as the Church of the rich and the powerful, thus complicating relations with indigenous subcultures of the poor, the oppressed, and the exploited.

Even in Western industrialized countries, toward which Pius XII's policy had been aimed, the results were meager. The Church, of course, had gained in worldly power and prestige by taking revenge against the old liberal-bourgeois secularism. In the shadow of the alliance with the bourgeoisie, and in the name of their common anticommunism, it had consolidated old and new privileges. But its spiritual and religious influence did not increase. On the contrary, all highly industrialized capitalist countries underwent a process of "de-Christianization" with more and more people abandoning religion.

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This was favored by the confusion between material and spiritual interests, by the Church's taking sides in social and political struggles, and by the instrumentalization of religion in the anticommunist struggle. Thus, even in Western Europe, Pius XII's plan for a "Catholic recovery" was a dismal failure.

John XXIII's Turn

At the end of Pius XII's papacy, there was a profound crisis in the relationship between the Catholic Church and contemporary culture. This context and the reactions triggered inside the Church explain the turn which occured with John XXIII's papacy and the Council. This is not to de-emphasize the importance of other factors internal to Church affairs and the Catholic world, such as the maturation of new cultural experiences and theories which had remained marginalized as long as Pius XII's conservatism prevailed but which were alive in significant sections of the clergy, intellectuals, and the youth. The same can be said of the emergence of long-repressed reactions to the excessive centralization of power in the Roman Curia, the desire to break out of the increasingly narrow Eurocentrism by paying more attention to diverse cultures and situations, and the request for greater autonomy by the bishops of other countries. Clearly, all of this had played a role, but its effect can be properly understood only in the light of a more general historical and political framework.

Thus, the manner in which John XXIII tackled the problems inherited from Pope Pius XII was strongly affected by the prevailing political and cultural climate. The late '50s and early '60s were characterized by the thawing of relations between East and West with the introduction of détente; the achievement of national independence by many countries in Asia and Africa; the growth of hopes for change in many Western countries after the post-war period of great capitalist development; and the emergence of movements commited to human and social emancipation in the resurgence of labor struggles after 1960 and the rise of the women's movement.

Although John XXIII was a moderate, he shared the optimism of that historical situation, and, given his strong personality, he saw it as an opportunity to renew faith in the Church's potential for development. This was conditional on her ability to shake off the excessively rigid schemes of the past; to affirm the priority of pastoral activities relevant to temporal interests in order to speak again to the masses; to open a dialogue with other religions and even nonbelievers; and to look without fear at those movements (affecting workers, women, and colonial peoples) whose demands for equality and liberation he saw as a positive "sign of the times." These were the options which characterized John XXIII's papacy as expounded in the encyclical *Pacem in Terris*. More than doctrinal elaboration or partial reforms of ecclesiastical organization, they had a profoundly innovating effect.

Thus, though there is a connection between Pope Roncalli's turn and the new cultural, social, and political situation, it would be excessively reductive to consider this turn only as a function of that particular historical situation.

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There were deeper currents that became expressed in John's papacy and the Council: they were a sign of an unsuspected vitality of the religious phenomenon, and they revealed new contradictions precisely in that relation between Catholicism and bourgeois society which Pius XII's policies had regarded as fundamental and privileged.

The discussions which began then in the Catholic Church became food for thought for Marxists who came to realize the radical inadequacy of interpretations of religion provided by mechanistic versions of Marxism. On the other hand, they confirmed the views of Marxists such as the Italian communists, who had already analyzed the emergence of diverse positions within the Catholic Church. For years, Italian communists had maintained the possibility of an understanding with considerable segments of Christianity which would not only deal with the defense of fundamental human and civilized values (peace, freedom, democracy, etc.) but also with the overcoming of capitalist relations of production and the construction of a different society.

Paul VI's Reforms

Today, a few years after Pope Paul VI's death, it may be easier to evaluate the meaning of his papacy. While alive, Paul VI was widely discussed, especially by Catholics. Since his first actions as Pope, his fundamental goal had been to moderate the Counciliar movement toward a compromise with tradition. In fact, his very election had been seen as the beginning of a process of "going backwards" relative to the more advanced and innovative positions reached in the last few months of John XXIII's papacy and the first phase of the Council.

Undoubtedly, Paul VI was very concerned with preventing the renewal from eroding Church organization and discipline. This is the reason, e.g., for his caution *vis à vis* Lefèvre, the traditionalist French bishop who opposed liturgical reform. Moreover, because of his predilection for intellectual matters, in which he was more interested than his predecessor, Paul VI perceived the complexity of problems modernity posed for Catholic thought, and he was afraid that if the renewal went too far it would result in serious difficulties for Church teachings. Paul VI's actions on a whole range of problems revealed an attitude of moderation which has remained deeply rooted in Catholic behavior. This applies specifically to problems of family and sexual morality (such as birth control, which was treated in an entirely traditional manner in the encyclical *Humanae vitae* of July 25, 1968, as well as divorce and abortion) and to the role of women in the Church.

In retrospect, however, it is becoming increasingly clear that Paul VI had a decisive role in fulfilling the work of the Council and implementing its principles of renewal. This was due to his long political experience and his awareness of the cultural complexity of the problems. In particular, Paul VI was the Pope of reforms: from the reform of the liturgy to that of the Roman Curia, from the recognition of a greater role for bishops' conferences to the sys-

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tematic replacement of missionary bishops with native bishops, and from the synod of the bishops to the transcending of Eurocentrism in the constitution of the ecclesiastical hierarchy. To appreciate this, consider the following data, which indicate the changes that took place in the Catholic Church as a result. At the time of Pius XII's death, the membership of the College of Cardinals reflected the centralization of the Catholic Church around the Roman Curia and the prevailing Eurocentrism. Of the 55 living cardinals, one-third (18) were Italians; another third (18) were from other European countries; and only 19 came from outside of Europe. Of these 19, there were 5 North Americans and 1 Australian. There were 13 cardinals from the Third World: 9 South Americans, 2 from traditional Catholic communities of the Eastern Rite (though they lived in Rome), 1 Indian, and 1 Chinese. All of Africa did not have a single cardinal.

By contrast, twenty years later, at the Conclave of October 14-16, 1978, which culminated with the election of Karol Wojtyla, the non-European cardinals (56) for the first time outnumbered the Europeans (55). There were 44 cardinals from underdeveloped or developing countries of Latin America, Asia, and Africa. Naturally, this change reflects a deeper change: the end of Eurocentrism, the transcending of the Church's identification with a given civilization and with a particular political and economic system, and the willingness by the Catholic Church to operate on a worldwide scale while showing regard for cultural and social differences. In short, Paul VI was the Pope who carried out most of the "universalizing" of the Roman Church through his reforms, diplomatic initiatives, and by focusing on the problems of Catholicism in Latin America, Asia, and Africa.

In the early post-war years, Paul VI had played a decisive role in European Christian parties, especially the Italian Christian Democratic Party, and had gone so far as to favor the long-standing principle of the unity of Catholics within a single party. Nevertheless, in the wake of the Council, he came to recognize the legitimacy of pluralism regarding Catholic citizens' economic, social, and political options. He explicitly emphasized this in the letter *Octagesima Adveniens*, published on the occasion of the eightieth anniversary of *Rerum Novarum*.

The Present Papacy

Where does Karol Wojtyla's papacy fit in relation to these reforms? The publication of John Paul II's social encyclical, *Laborem Exercens*, reopened a debate which began at the time of his first encyclical, *Redemptor Hominis*, and on the occasion of his first actions (in particular, his trip to Latin America for the Bishop's Conference). *Laborem Exercens* and the formula of the social encyclical have been seen as an attempt at partial restoration of the pre-Council days — especially to those schemes of the old "Catholic social doctrine" which it had apparently superseded. On the other hand, in the last encyclical can also be seen not only a very advanced criticism of any form of exploitation, but also an attempt to come to terms for the first time with the

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problems of so-called post-industrial societies.

Although Pope Wojtyla's approach to many topics exhibits a moderate or even definitely conservative nature, it is unlikely that his decisions reflect a search for new meanings in the typical positions of pre-Counciliar Catholicism. In contrast to John XXIII's acute sensibility, these decisions seem to be partly due to the typical narrowness of Polish Catholicism, e.g., a total deafness regarding women's liberation movements. This conservatism, also present in Paul VI, is partly due to a resistance deeply rooted in Catholic tradition with respect to family and sexual morality. Moreover, while the teachings of Roncalli and of Montini reflected openness to the questions of a phase of crisis and change, in Wojtyla's preaching there is a tendency to stress his own "truths." The earlier phase implied modification of old schemes and entrenched cultural habits, the development of profound institutional reforms, and a coming to grips with problems of a rapidly changing society comprising non-Christian political and intellectual movements. With Pope John Paul II, the concern with institutional consolidation seems once again to supersede that of critically applying one's positions to new situations and problems.

Yet, it would be a mistake to see this as a restoration or as a step backwards *vis-à-vis* the Council. The fundamental elements of the Council transformation are an irreversible fact in the Church's policies. What differs is the emphasis. These fundamental elements include the decision to supersede Eurocentrism; the effort to deal with different ethnic and cultural situations; essential organizational and institutional reforms; emphasis on matters of faith and morals over temporal interests; and rejection of identification with a particular economic, social, and political system — an identification which had turned out to be discrediting and had contributed to create the very critical situation in the Church at the end of Pius XII's papacy.

John Paul II's papacy is different. Wojtyla's goal is much more ambitious than a mere restoration. It is rather the attempt to exploit the Catholic Church's new energies, acquired through the Council's organizational and cultural reforms, to pursue a new role as a great "moral power" in the world. In so doing, the Church can also exploit the strength deriving from her institutional continuity.

The Pope's plan focuses primarily on anthropological teaching and socio-ethical problems. It is not accidental that the topic emphasized by John Paul II is not the formulation of economic and social answers conforming with Christian principles (in which case we would have a return to "Catholic social doctrine") but "Christian humanism" as the basis for the protection of human values. Wojtyla's "Christian" anthropology is certainly up to date, is based on the conclusions of the Council debate, and takes into account various currents of modern culture from Hegelianism to Marxism, phenomenology, and existentialism. The Council debate is seen as closed, and the resulting "Christian humanism" is presented once again as adequate to answer all problems of contemporary life on its own and with no need of help by "other humanisms." This is the basis of that "certainty" which charac-

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terizes Wojtyla's teaching and his conviction that the Council has cured all the shortcomings the Church had in confronting the modern world. This explains the Church's claim to a leading worldwide role as an institution of recognized moral and spiritual authority with inevitable political repercussions.

Two Controversial Points

Clearly, this is very different from a simple attempt to turn the clock backwards and helps to explain the theoretical and practical difficulties with its two most controversial and weak features. The first concerns the self-sufficiency Wojtyla's preaching attributes to "Christian humanism." It is presented as the only valid source of truth and certainty, in contrast to the various crises affecting all modern ideologies. Many of the Pope's positions seem to deny that openness to dialogue which had been the most striking innovation of the Council. It seems as though through the Council's debates and reforms, the Church has come to terms once and for all with the great questions accumulated over the last few centuries. Presumably, the Church has done its homework and can regard as closed the process of revision, so that she can now face with new clarity all the problems of the contemporary world. But even Catholics realize that the popular success of the last encyclical cannot hide the real process of "secularization" in today's world. The reduction of religious practice, the crisis in the priestly vocation, the "de-Christianization" of behavior, and the practical materialism typical of industrial societies are all irrefutable facts which cannot be counterbalanced by any "return to religion." Moreover, at the level of doctrine, the Church faces great unresolved questions. Consider, e.g., the difficulties encountered in ecumenical dialogue or in the question of family and sexual morality, where the conservative solutions adopted by Paul VI and reiterated even more rigidly by John Paul II have not provided a promising contribution.

The first question, then, is: can Catholicism deal with these problems if it rejects the openness of the Council by ignoring other positions and those movements most concerned with today's major questions? The answer must be: No. Without a courageous openess to critical dialogue there is the risk that, despite declarations of good will, a moderate retrenchment will prevail and that the Church will become a generic "spiritual authority" respected by everyone but whose role is more apparent than real. Thus, a gap seems to be developing between the wide approval of certain attitudes of the present papacy and the translation of this consensus into a real moral and practical program. Consider, e.g., what happened in Italy concerning the question of abortion.

The second point complements the first. It concerns the ever problematic relation between faith and history, between religious commitment and concrete action to solve current problems. At the moment, the Catholic Church is going through a transition. Beginning with John XXIII's papacy and the Council, she has kept a distance from capitalism, colonialism, and imperialism. She has also stressed that her mission is above all a religious one and that

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through it she seeks to contribute to the principles of freedom, justice, and solidarity in human relations — independently of the political, social, and economic systems under which people live. This stress on the distinction between religion and politics is obviously correct. There is, however, a great gap between statements of principle and practical actions. There is also a risk of this apparent "neutrality" degenerating into abstractness or into an ethical-anthropological sermon which, in practice, is tied to the status quo.

Though the Church as such refuses to identify with any system, Catholics as citizens (and often through their organizations) take definite social stands and frequently have important responsibilities within these systems. In various Western European countries, Christian parties have been or are still in control of the government, but their actions have not been noticeably different from those of the traditional conservative or moderate parties of the bourgeoisie (in many cases even in their moral behavior). There is a whole continent — Latin America — where the Church has great authority and influence. Yet, despite the solemn declarations of the Bishops' Conferences and the admirable opposition of a portion of the clergy, the Church hierarchy very often has had, and still has, close ties with the local ruling classes, while millions of people continue to be subjected to miserable conditions, brutal exploitation, and oppression. Despite advances in transcending the limitations of Eurocentrism and to base the Church in local cultures, in the Third World, Catholicism still appears as the rich churches of North America, West Germany, and other capitalist countries. Finally, in Eastern Europe, the Catholic Church cannot avoid coming to terms with the problems connected with "real socialism."

Can the distinction between religion and politics allow the Church to ignore this? When faced with the tragic problems posed, can the Church limit itself to merely condemning oppression and injustice? Clearly it would be a mistake for the Left to ask the Church to intervene in politics on its side: it would reintroduce in a reversed form a dangerous and unacceptable confusion between religion and politics. Here we have a new version of the old problem of the relation between faith and history, between statements of principle and practical behavior, between religious commitment and concrete commitment to respond to the expectations of millions of people. If this problem is ignored, it is easy to revert to a kind of preaching irrelevant to the concrete interests or the moderation typical of the Catholic world.

Obviously, these two problematic points do not destroy the importance of the positive changes introduced by the Council. One need only recall the clear stand by important parts of the Church in the struggle for peace and against rearmament, as well as the unambiguous statements in the last encyclical in defense of human freedom, against any form of exploitation, both in systems with private property and with state ownership of the means of production. These show that the renewal engendered by the Council is not merely a superficial phenomenon. Beyond its conservative tendencies, the Catholic world contains forces, currents, and positions engaged in transformation and renewal.

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CHURCH RENEWAL IN BRAZIL

by Patrick M. Hughes

The more recent history of Catholicism in Latin America contradicts the image of the Church as the mainstay of tradition, the established order and the implacable enemy of modernism. Many have come to view the involvement of the Church in social and political questions as "progressive" and even "radical." Thus, the secret *Report on the Catholic Church in Brazil* commissioned by President Ernesto Geisel in 1974 came to the following conclusion: "The Church is *the* most active enemy of national security. It supports the use of means which are clearly subversive; it promotes the substitution of the present socio-political and economic structure with a new order — one which in every way is similar to that advocated in Marxist philosophy."[1] The *Report* went on to point out that the 1964 "revolution" (the right wing military *coup d'etat*) had a paradoxical effect. Precisely when the "International Communist Movement" had begun to experience great difficulty in operating within the university and working class milieus (due to successful repression) subversive activity within the Catholic Church increased enormously. Religious elements have begun the *conscientizaçaõ* of the lower classes concerning the fact of a privileged or ruling class. They reject capitalism and the regimes that support it and have the same goals. Indeed, the theology advocated by this radical church insists that "The main requirement — to belong to the New Church — is to love man and commit oneself to the socio-political struggle for his liberation."[2] The *Report* stated that even ecclesiastical authorities had been affected. This, of course, made it very difficult to combat these tendencies. Worse still, since the Church had no authority to check the radical elements, given that the hierarchy itself was compromised, the state had been forced to do so. The repression had become one of the greatest sources of conflict between Church and state.[3]

The Failure of the Traditional Church

The *Centro Dom Vital*, founded in 1922, organized the Church's first response to the industrialization and urban expansion of the early 20th century. Inspired by the ideas of De Maistre and Maurras, the founders expressed concern over the religious indifference of non-religious elites and the desertion of urban workers. To develop a doctrinal foundation among Catholics, they founded the Catholic Action Movement for universities and factories, while a newspaper, *A Ordem*, promoted the values of order, authority, morality,

1. Quoted in *Veja*, April 11, 1979, (Editoria Abril, Sao Paulo, 1979), p. 3.
2. Quoted in *Veja*, *op. cit.*, p. 5.
3. See *Veja, op. cit.*, p. 5.

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Catholicism and nationalism. The movement generally followed the Italian pattern of Catholic action that found its values in an idealized "pure" Catholic past when there was no Protestantism, Free Masonry, capitalism, or Judaism.

Dom Leme, Bishop of Rio de Janeiro and co-founder of the *Centro Dom Vital,* responded to the wishes of those who wanted to enter politics by allowing the formation of the *Liga Eleitoral Catolica*. Its function was to act as watchdog over the candidates for election after the 1930 revolution. They were especially interested in safeguarding the family and religious instruction in schools. Some even flirted with parafascist ideology. Thus, in the place of an appeal to "conscience" and religously meaningful activity, the Catholic hierarchy demanded obedience. On the other hand, it hoped to practice in the new urban situation the old patterns of social control: to achieve the regulation of mass norms through influential political candidates and secular laws. In this, they were not without some success. Even if the popular processions and mass rallies of the 1920s and 30s petered out, the movement influenced the successive constitutions of 1934, 1946 and 1956.[4]

In the decades following 1930, urban populations grew, and new social classes, technobureaucrats and skilled blue collar workers made their appearance.[5] In the southern half of Brazil a new rural worker emerged in a rationalized agriculture, while in the northeast, where such rationalization did not occur, the Church found itself confronting an impoverished mass. In all cases, the erosion of Church influence was definite. Among intellectuals, positivism was challenged, not by *A Ordem*, but by an even more secularizing Marxism, while the new middle class became increasingly more hostile to the Catholic Church. The working classes became partly associated with this radical development. It is significant that the hierarchy of two major archdioceses, who prohibited the faithful under pain of excommunication to vote for communist candidates in the 1950s, failed to command the obedience of the people. Both communists who were running for office at the time were elected, even though 90% of the electorate declared itself Catholic.[6] Most of the working class tended to take an economistic and privatized attitude towards the world, independently of the Church. Many others, and especially the urban poor, abandoned Catholicism for other forms of religion, primarily Protestantism and Afro-syncretic religions, where they found a more appropriate religious meaning for their disorientation and loss of community in the city.[7] The "Catholic way of life" they had known, especially the clerically organized community, no longer suited the new social context of life. The Church had lost its social role.

4. See Paulo J. Krischke, "Nationalism and the Catholic Church: The Preparation for Democracy in Brazil" in *Studies LARU* (Latin American Research Unit), no. 2, Feb. 1977, (LAEU, Toronto), p. 63 ff. See also, Candido Mendes, *Memento dos Vivos, A Esquerda Catholic no Brasil*, (Tempo Brasileiro: Rio de Janeiro, 1966), pp. 33 ff.

5. See Luiz Carlos Breasser Pereira, *Desenvolvimento e Crise no Brasil 1930-1967*, (Zaher Editores: Rio de Janeiro, 1968), pp. 81 ff.

6. Candido Procipio Ferreira de Camargo, *Igreja e Desenvolvimento*. CE BRAP, (Editora Brasileira de Ciencias Ltd.: Sao Paulo, 1971), p. 21.

7. *Ibid*. pp. 18 ff. Cf. also, Emilio Willems, *Followers of the New Faith*. (Vanderbilt University Press, 1967).

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Thus, the initial relation between religion and the industrialized urban world, between the Church and modernization, was not dissimilar to that of Europe. From the Enlightenment to the Second Vatican Council in the 1960s, the Church as an institution rejected the intellectual form and content of modernist culture, while, politically, it opted for counter-revolution. It favored the maintenance of order and uncritically supported elites in power. First, it was committed to the aristocratic society in the face of the French Revolution and then to the reproduction of a capitalist social order in the 19th and early 20th centuries.

The Catholic Church was not alone in this. The European Churches tended to agree with Burke that they were the buttress of the state and guarantors of privilege. This long night of religious stagnation, the loss of a specifically religious interest in a servile relation to dominant classes that had no regard for religious values, saw its lowest point when many Church figures openly supported fascism — especially in Eastern Europe, Italy, Germany, and France. It is not surprising, therefore, that for their part, in the period of social development from the 18th century on, democratic forces in Europe relegated the Churches and religion to the periphery of a world where they came to dominate. In their progressive self-definition, the upwardly mobile social classes laid claim to the significant spheres of public, social, and intellectual activity.[8] Most intellectuals regarded theology as an error which science would correct. In terms of the progressive development of human consciousness in the face of an alienated human world, Marx's critique of religion stands out as a different form of rejection. If, he argued, religion is the expression of a distressed, exploited, and dominated mankind in history, the revolutionary attitude of the *demos* which would overthrow and control all alien forces, was summed up in the phrase: "I am nothing and I should be everything."[9]

But this European secularization was a long drawn out process. If tradition was being eroded, new institutions and ideologies were being constructed. In Brazil, however, the traditional Church and the traditionalists' Catholic Action was judged inadequate within a very short time. The new urban populations underwent rapid changes, while the large migration to the cities from Europe and from the interior of Brazil made it very difficult for the Church to respond. But it is also significant that even though there had been no real bourgeois development in the 19th century, the Church, tied as it was to the landed oligarchy, was successfully challenged among urban elites by positivism. Lawyers, intellectuals, bureaucrats, military personnel, many political figures, and even some clergy looked towards France for their ideal world, even if there was no corresponding social reality. Urban society had in many ways already marginalized the conservative Church, even if the hierarchy continued to seek a role in its affairs.[10]

8. There were two European exceptions to this, Ireland and Poland, where the Church was identified with the nation in a struggle against a foreign power. See Luckmann, *The Invisible Religion*, (MacMillan: New York, 1974).

9. Karl Marx, "Contribution to the Critique of Hegel's Philosophy of Right, Introduction" in *Karl Marx, Early Writings*, tr. and edited by T.B. Bottomore (McGraw-Hill: New York, 1964), p. 56.

10. Ferreira de Camargo, *op. cit.*, p. 6.

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New Forms of Catholic Activity: 1945-1964.

After WWII and during the short period of democratic government before the 1964 "revolution," a new form of Catholic Action made its appearance alongside the old Italian form. Based on Maritain's ideas, the French Church had developed a new approach to the urban laity. Catholic militancy was to operate along *class lines* and was to be designed for *specific milieus*. This new strategy was based on the recognition that Catholics had to participate actively *in the world* and that the Catholic community was a *unit of influence* in that world. Thus, it bound itself to the transformation of one's milieu (office, schoolroom, factory) into a structure conducive to Christian nurture.

There were two significant moments in this new direction: the "Movimento de Natal" and the Christian University Movement. *Igreja e Desenvolvimento* (1971), written by Ferreira de Camargo provides an excellent analysis of the events in the state of Natal. The movement began in 1948. Unlike former attempts to teach theology and organize prayer, this Christian effort was not very intellectual. It focused on the organization of elementary schooling for adults, the formation of rural labor unions combined with some Catholic instruction. These activities were centrally controlled by the diocese and financed with the support of the government and American aid. Decisions, however, were not mandated by Bishop Eugenio Sales. They were developed through discussion with laymen present. Centralized control was not traditional in Brazil,[11] but the democratic form of the movement was novel even for Europe.

"The Movimento de Natal," especially on the occasion of a drought when its leaders demanded, received, and successfully applied government aid, proved that the Church had a role to play in Brazil and that it could intervene concretely. Such efforts to transform the attitudes of the peasantry and newly educated adults was one of the most exciting aspects of the "Movimento de Natal." The basic aspect of conversion and the priority given to a change of mentality rather than structures made this approach acceptable to a Catholic world. To facilitate this change of attitudes Paulo Freire developed the now famous *Pedagogy of the Oppressed.* The fact that it was later banned as subversive indicates how effective it could be in politicizing adults who frequented the education centers. Freire was not a Marxist, yet he sought a rejection of all former structures peculiar to peasant life. He sought to clarify the dual option of the peasants: "The oppressed suffer from the duality which has established itself in their innermost being. They discover that without freedom they cannot exist authentically. Yet, although they desire authentic existence, they fear it. They are at one and the same time themselves and the oppressor whose consciousness they have internalized. The conflict lies in the choice between being wholly themselves or being divided; between ejecting the oppressor within or not ejecting him; between human solidarity or aliena-

11. Ivan Vallier, "Religious Elites: Differentiations and Developments in Roman Catholicism," in *Elites in Latin America,* ed. by S.M. Lipset and A. Solari (Oxford University Press: New York, 1967).

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tion; between following prescriptions or having choices; between being spectators or actors; between acting or having the illusion of acting through the action of the oppressors; between speaking out or being silent, castrated in their power to create and re-create, in their power to transform the world. This is the tragic dilemma of the oppressed which their education must take into account."[12]

Instead of attitudes of accommodation and subjection, the Christians acquired a critical consciousness which promoted individual responsibility, made each person capable of dialogue with their world and thereby facilitated their creative integration as the subject of their own existence. The method sought to open the door to awareness (*consciencia*) of self, of others (communication between two subjects) and of the world (the intended object). Though the method was regarded as socially "neutral," the world and the "others" were not. Hence, the peasants' eyes were opened to an appreciation of the predatory violence that characterized their existence. The "Movimento de Natal" recognized that if dissatisfaction was being generated it was because there were many "causes" for it.

The Christian University Movement was initially less active and consisted in the organization of closed study groups of middle class friends reading Teilhard de Chardin, Mounier, Marcel, Lebret, and papal documents on social justice.[13] While such groups had little success in making Christianity relevant in the political and economic life of the nation, it was through them that the Church opened a door to the intellectual and educated urban population. At the National Conference of the *Juventude Universitaria Catolica* (JUC) in 1958, they criticized the inactivity of their study groups and their lack of penetration in universities compared with the successful contact made in the rural milieu. The communists' success in the National Union of Students (UNE) stimulated urgent demands for a Catholic alternative. Their new activism was rewarded when the following year Aldo Arantes, a member of JUC, was elected head of UNE, even though the majority of the membership was communist.

It was a time of tremendous political agitation, but Arantes' public statements seeking to out-radicalize the radicals and the fact that the protesters marched as *Christians* shocked the conservative laity and worried the Catholic hierarchy. From their standpoint such a public political stance was not compatible with "Catholic Action" since they were appearing as representatives of the Catholic Church. The hierarchy did not criticize the content of the message but focused on the exclusiveness of their demands ("authentic" Christian action had to be revolutionary) and their rejection of the Church's historical role in Brazil.

Bishop Eugenio Sales was present at the next National Conference of JUC 1961. The tone of the discussions was even stronger because JUC had been extremely successful and in one year had penetrated almost every university

12. Paulo Freire, *Pedagogy of the Oppressed*, trans. by Myra Bergman Ramos (The Seabury Press: New York, 1970), pp. 32 ff.

13. Mendes, *op. cit.*, pp. 13 ff.

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in the country. Bishop Sales reported back to the National Conference of Bishops and recommended that strong measures be taken to control JUC. For the bishops only a certain pluralism was acceptable since otherwise their own viewpoint would not get a hearing. On the other hand, JUC considered limiting the authority of the Bishops and clergy. They even debated the utility of maintaining any connection with the official church.

The more politically minded members of the university movement moved in two directions. On the one hand, those "leftists" interested in a more constitutional approach to change flooded the ranks of a hitherto weak Christian Democratic Party. Others founded the *Acao Popular* in July 1962.[14] As the title Popular Action, indicates, this was to be a political movement rather than a party, and it attracted many who had never been in the Christian University Movement. Indeed, they declared that it was not a Christian movement (though many priests and nuns were members), that it had no formal ties to the hierarchy, and that no references to religion would be made. Nevertheless, all their activities and "manifestos" merely crystallized and reflected the new theories developed by the Christian university student organization. To be Christian was to be *engagé*.

The *Acao Popular* conceived of itself as a truly democratic movement, and it came out against any action which might curtail freedom of choice among the people. As they saw it, if Brazil was to take on a new course, it had to do so with the knowing will of the people. This was a novel interpretation of traditional Catholic education. So the function of the AP was to *conscientizar* (awaken to action) and not *massificar* (massify). The group was very effective since their friendship with the Church allowed their penetration into every corner of national activity.

The AP's activities; the Christian Democratic Party's demands for direction in relation to the Brazilian crisis; the continous stream of "national conferences" escalating the scope of the debate since 1922, when the Centro Dom Vital was founded; the public character of the struggle for meaning — all brought the hierarchy together to re-define their Church in a new urbanized Brazil, where the landed oligarchy no longer ruled. Their first reaction was typically negative. But the Second Vatican Council was underway in Rome and, curiously (for them), many of the values espoused by the university movement (JUC) were being legitimated in Rome. The Brazilian hierarchy in general was being undermined by the very authoritative voice they assumed as the basis of their conservative attitudes.

In terms of the traditional European Church, the Second Vatican Council (1962-1965) clearly represented an officially sanctioned reversal. Even though the specific activities of theological dissidents or the politics of worker-priests in European factories were not openly approved, it is clear that the Catholic Church was undergoing changes. Thus the changes in the Brazilian Church, generally cannot be regarded solely as a mere function of specific conditions, although the latter defined the precise form of the Church's

14. *Ibid.* pp. 30 ff.

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renewal. That the Church was experiencing great internal stress can be readily seen in terms of the events of 1964 in Brazil.

The new Rome nominated Dom Helder Camara (the "red bishop") to the Archdiocese of Recife and Olinda in the Brazilian northeast. His inauguration sermon in early March of 1964 stated that he would work towards the transformation of socio-economic conditions because only in a "new situation" would it be possible to live according the gospel of Jesus Christ. Religion was, in his view, very relevant to the question of structural change. At the same time, the extreme "right" of the old Catholic Action Movement of 1922 organized the mass marches in support of "Tradition, Family, and Fatherland" which ushered in the military dictatorship of March 30, 1964, and, in compliance with the wishes of this new regime, Rome replaced the Cardinal Archbishop of Sao Paulo.

From Conservative to Progressive Christianity

Two new factors in Brazil were especially significant in determining Church politics. In 1964, the government was overthrown by a military dictatorship, and multinational investment became *the* determining factor in the national economy. With considerable popular support and U.S. approval, an administrative military elite buttressed by well-educated civilian technocrats overthrew Goulart's democratic government. The new regime "eased" Cardinal Motta, the Archbishop of Sao Paulo sympathetic to a Christian democratic development, into "retirement" at Aparecida do Norte. The newly appointed Archbiship of the poverty-stricken northeast, Dom Helder Camara, was denounced as the "red bishop." Dom Eugenio Sales, a very conservative bishop, was attacked as a communist. Less prominent elements of the new Church elite, the clergy, and laity (many of them sons and daughters of the oldest Catholic families in Brazil) were systematically persecuted, imprisoned, tortured, killed, or extradited.

In these activities the regime had initially broad support of many conservative clergy, hierarchy, and important laity in the Catholic Church.[15] However, the regime's repressive attitude was to have a paradoxical effect. The military elites that had always been secular, positivist, and modernizing became *the* defenders of tradition — including a traditional Catholic Church. On the other hand, the Catholic Church gradually ironed out its more immediate contradictions and re-established a certain unity as *the* defender of human rights and dignity. No longer seeking to control the masses from above through collaboration with the elites, a democratic Church identified with the oppressed.

The official Church's actions over the next decade are clearly described in the documents of the National Conference of Brazilian Bishops. In the face of dictatorship, the Church has consistently sought to oppose the absolute authority of those in power. The official church has stood by journalists, writers, academics, democratic activists of all persuasions, political figures,

15. Charles Antoine, *Church and Power*, (Orbis Books: New York, 1973).

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church personnel, and above all, trade unionists, Indians, peasants, and the urban poor. It defined itself as the defender of human beings — all those who, for whatever reason, were victims of the government's systematic terror.[16] The Brazilian people, accustomed to an unresponsive alien hierarchy, saw a rejuvenated Church confront its ancient secular ally. Such a systematic confrontation has been effective. Despite its cruelty, the dictatorship has been unable to keep its subjects united and loyal.

The question of human rights did not merely take a political form. The peculiar form of capitalist development contributed to the transformation of the traditional opposition between religion and 19th century materialism. In the wake of the 1964, there was a sudden influx of large multinational investments. While the "Brazilian miracle" initially brought riches to some, and prosperity to many skilled workers and an expanding middle class of professionals and bureaucrats, there were four important repercussions for the Church. Development was extremely uneven. There was a high degree of *dependence* for those who were employed, since investments were always subject to withdrawal. It involved the *marginalization* of a large number of people who were irrelevant to the national economy. Finally, it involved the *concentration of capital*, including the export of the national surplus, in a relatively small sector of the population. A corollary of this was, of course, the mode of consumption. The luxurious and extravagant lifestyle of the few was in sharp contrast with the condition of the *povo*.[17] This socio-economic form has been well documented.[18] The important point here is that all of this took on religious connotations. In the hands of the Church, these observations turned into an immanent critique.

The new Church emphasizes the oppressed. This relation between Church and social classes reverses a policy established since the days of Constantine. Moreover, the Church has always rejected bourgeois materialism. Here, however, material development was accepted. What was rejected was the form of social development in Latin America.

The Second General Conference of Latin American Episcopate in Bogota, Columbia in 1968 unexpectedly resulted in the now famous Medellin Documents, which defined the pastors' commitment to participate in Latin American social and economic affairs.[19] According to these documents, poverty in Latin America has been well documented, and its causes located.

16. *Os Documentos da CNBB, IGRE JA E GOVERNO*, EXTRA (Collecao Livro-Reportagem), Numero 3, Feb. 1977, Ano 1, Edicoes Simbolo, Sao Paulo, p. 7.

17. The *povo* refers to the people. In a certain context, it has the same meaning as "the nation" for Abbe Sieyes in the French Revolution, i.e., all those who are not privileged. But in Latin America the phrase refers simply to those who do not have money.

18. Kenneth Paul Erickson and Patrick V. Peppe, "Dependent Capitalist Development, U.S. Foreign Policy and Repression of the Working Class in Chile and Brazil," in *Latin American Perspectives*, no. 8, vol. 11, (Winter 1976), no. 1; and Celso Furtado, Theotonio dos Santos, and Herbert Souza, *The Internationalization of Capital,* Studies LARU, vol. 11, no. 1, Oct. 1977, LARU (Latin American Research Unit).

19. Penny Lernoux, "Notes on a Revolutionary Church: Human Rights in Latin America" (Alicia Patterson Foundation, Feb. 1978), p. 1.

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They are to be found in the relation between rich and poor within each nation and in the dependent relation between the developed world and the continent as a whole.[20] Thus, a combination of two factors — one local and the other foreign — explains the degraded economic conditions.[21] From the theological viewpoint, this is a "sinful situation"[22] because, "where social peace does not exist there we will find social, political, economic and cultural inequalities, there we will find the rejection of the peace of the Lord and a rejection of the Lord Himself."[23]

Medellin saw the Church's role in terms of historical change. It declared that "We are on the threshold of a new epoch in the history of our continent. It appears to be a time full of zeal for full emancipation, of liberation from every form of servitude, of personal maturity and of collective integration. In these signs we perceive the first indications of the painful birth of a new civilization."[24]

The gradual shift in official Church leadership within Brazil which displaced the hegemonic conservatives and guaranteed the supremacy of progressive forces embracing material development and many aspects of modernization while rejecting the specific form of capitalist development in the 60s and 70s was facilitated by the fact that the progressives could always appeal over the heads of their local conservative hierarchy to the authority of Vatican II and to the Medellin Documents. This external support for the formation of a new Church in Brazil was encouraged by the appointment of Dom Paulo Evaristo Arns as Cardinal Archbishop of Sao Paulo in 1969. His predecessor, appointed in 1964, had repeatedly supported government repression of progressive clergy. In the 70s Dom Paulo played a leading role in the opposition movement and continues to play a prophetic role pointing out that the king has no clothes except those made by the *povo*. A spectacular blend of religious values and scientific facts may be seen in the volume *Growth and Pauperization* (1975), which describes the situation in Sao Paulo. Dom Paulo recommends this study for the faithful, declaring in the "Preface": "A bishop, and with him the entire Church, cannot stand by silently while people are mowed down by the violence of malnutrition, bad health, sanitation conditions, and traffic and work accidents. Nor can he tacitly condone excessive labor, fatigue, pauperization, unemployment, salaries that do not buy even minimum necessities, inadequate housing and public transportation, general insecurity and the stifling of the freedom of association, information, and the redress of just demands....The divulgence of such evils means, you may say, that we contribute to the intensification of the problem and exasperate the people? The

20. See "The Medellin Conference Documents," in *Renewing the Earth, Catholic Documents on Peace, Justice and Liberation*, edited by J. O'Brien and Thomas A. Shannon: (Image Books: New York, 1977), p. 549.

21. *Ibid.*, p. 561.

22. *Ibid.*

23. *Ibid.*, p. 566.

24. "Introduction," no. 4, In *The Church in the Present Day Transformation of Latin America in the Light of the Council Documents of the Second General Conference of Latin American Bishops;* (Medellin: Columbia, 1968), Bogota, General Secretariat, CELAM, 1970.

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facts may cause anguish, but knowing them is the necessary route to the discovery and acceptance of solutions. And the people, through their daily experience, know with the precision and clarity of one who must fight each day to achieve the sustenance of self and family, the full extent and gravity of the problems. It is necessary that we break through the barricades that inhibit the people from organizing, participating in and contributing to the solution of their problems and those of the city. To the extent that the social and political initiatives of the working classes continue to be blocked, it is difficult to imagine how Sao Paulo might be a truly human city!"[25]

The commitment of the hierarchy to a different form of development did not and does not mean a rejection of capitalist development. As can be seen from this representative statement, however, inevitable consequences of a peripheral development drained not only the conservative vision but also much of the reformist program of all religious significance in the 60s and 70s. Of course, the present austerity programs required by the debt simply aggravate this whole question. The universalism of the Church within Latin America and within each nation, must reject uneven development and the marginalization of its *povo*.

On the other hand, Medellin's commitment to a creative role in the process of an integral development defined the form of religious participation in this world. The formerly dogmatic Church of the powerful took a new stance in relation to all forms of subordination and dependency. The Church must now promote a democratic development with the people, who must — and this has religious significance — participate at all levels where collective decisions are made. The lack of political awareness in Latin America, they said, made the educating action of the Church indispensable.[26] This *concientizacion*, means "forming people committed to world peace."[27]

This commitment to politically and economically defined human rights is not confined to the Catholic hierarchy. Alongside the stodgy, bureaucratic, formal parish structure great numbers of Basic Ecclesiastical Communities (CEB's) have been formed throughout Latin America, but especially in Brazil since the sixties. No one knows exactly how many there are, but Jarbas Passarinho, reflecting the fears of the regime in Brazil, declared in 1981 that there were some 200,000 spread across the country. While extremely heterogeneous in form and content, these new active groups testify to the fact that the renewed Church has penetrated the "bases" of modern Brazilian society. Their generally dynamic vocabulary is best expressed in the verb most often repeated by the members: *caminhar* — to travel. The term accentuates change and movement in a specific known direction: a transformative project directed towards the future. The Basic Ecclesiatical Communities "constitute the Church in its most rejuvenated form."[28]

25. "Introduction" to *Sao Paulo 1975, Crescimento e Pobreza* (Edicoes Loyola: Sao Paulo, 1976).
26. "The Medellin Conference Documents", *op. cit.*, p. 556.
27. *Ibid.*, p. 570.
28. Ferreira de Camargo, Candido Procopia, *Novos Estudos*, vol. 1, no. 2, April 1982, CEBRAP, Sao Paulo, p. 50.

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This development is unparalleled in the developed world. Weber and Troeltsch observed the breakup of larger religious units in the individualization of religious beliefs in "sects." The recent history of the Catholic Church in South America shows this same trend but in a different form. The tendency has been not so much toward the break-up of the broader Church affiliation, as in the reduction of the parish unit to a voluntary association, a social club where belief and morality is determined more by the community than by the official centers. In an increasingly diversified and contradictory Catholicism, the individual frequents the most compatible ministry and community available. The Basic Ecclesiastical Communities in Brazil also allow the manifold contradictions of modern society to be articulated *within* the Church.

National Identity and the Renewed Church

The national question has also affected the new situation of the Church and enhanced its role. If the Church of the people confronted an alienated state and economy, this involved in large measure the open exploitation of the continent by *foreign* interests. This factor was directly associated with the dictatorial state that in large measure could be and was perceived as a function of those foreign interests. The state and even the national army were defined as suppressing the "nation" and promoting not only an alien economic form that marginalized and impoverished the Latin American *povo* but also a *foreign* power. The characterization of multinational corporations as foreign was, of course, mediated by the new American presence in both economic and political life in Brazil after 1964, thereby making the designation "foreign" even more concrete. The technocratic rational administrative policies of the regime relentlessly sought to create the conditions for capital accumulation for large scale corporate investment without regard for the substantive human consequences, i.e., what had become the special focus of religion.[29]

Both the national elites and the government had great difficulty in being identified with the nation because of their association with foreign powers. Indeed, this vacuum was aggravated by the form of the state in this period. As a dictatorship, all internal democratic politics were suppressed. Consequently, secular leaders could not emerge to reflect the new interests independent of Church and military institutions. A new national institution — a truly national political life — had not been established on the frail but definte developments in that direction between 1945 and 1964.

Consequently, the moral authority of the opposition in the name of the *povo* rested with the Church which tended to be identified with the nation in the face of foreign influences in economic, political, and cultural spheres. The Medellin Conference identified the official Church with the people of Latin America. Commemorating 150 years of Brazilian independence in 1972, the Bishops of Brazil reached out to "invite all the children of this suffering

29. See for example "The Medellin Conference Documents," *op. cit.*, p. 561 ff.; Furtado Celso, et. al, *op. cit.*; Black, Jan Knippers, *United States Penetration of Brazil* (University of Pennsylvania Press, Philadelphia, 1977).

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fatherland to reflect on their responsibilities as Christians and as Brazilians...". The statement then elaborated the participation of the Church in the historical process whereby the *povo* matured, embracing the idea of independence. However, they went on to point out that if the Church was joyous because of what had been realized in these past 150 years "she recognizes that there is much to be done, because in the eyes of the Church, Independence is not a mere festive day of commemoration but a permanent process in which the Church's interest lies in guaranteeing her children a liberation from all servitudes that deny them those conditions indispensable to the realization of their human and Christian vocation."[30] Thus, if on this occasion they distinguished between Church and state, they made no distinction between Church and nation. The peculiar historical form in which the national question was posed added strength to the Church's oppositional stance, which assumed a natural right to leadership.

While the political "opening" or partial redemocratization since 1979 has somewhat defused this situation, the political and economic weakness of the elected opposition leaders guarantees the Church's continuing role as the defender of the "people," the "nation," the *povo brasileiro*, and the *povo latino*. It is also significant that, unlike the other two instances where the Church and the nation tend to be identified — i.e., Ireland and Poland, where the Church is conservative — in Latin America, progressive national development now has a positive religious connotation.

Conclusion

A number of related factors have forged the renewal of the Church in Brazil. Questions of the modern world happened to coincide with the crisis of the Church. Unlike the official European Church, the Latin American Church took on the role of spokesperson for the poor and the dissenting middle class and, on many occasions, was the only defender of national sovereignty. Even the Church's right wing became radicalized in the sense that state repression and foreign influence demanded some form of opposition. Moreover, the liturgical communities which might otherwise have tended towards charismatic mysticism, were drawn into the radical rejection of the new post-1964 Brazil. The Church took on a religious mission of national liberation while becoming increasingly rooted in local community movements.

But if the tension between religion and the world has resurfaced in Latin America, it was because life itself took on a positive religious meaning. In a paradoxical manner, hope in and commitment to the idea of progress, the political and economic emancipation of humankind, has passed from the children of the Enlightenment to the Church of liberation. Nor is there any going back on this new state of affairs. Religious values and religious interests identify the Catholic Church with social development and democratic political emancipation. Thus, the more the military regimentation of life, the more politically committed the Church will be. The more economic austerity and mass marginalization, the more socially radical the Church will become.

30 *Os Documentos da CNBB, op. cit.*, p. 49.

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"THE DRUM MAJOR INSTINCT": AMERICAN RELIGION SINCE 1945

by George Lipsitz

One of the most frightening developments of the 1980s has been the re-emergence of fundamentalist religion in the United States as the keystone of right wing politics. "Born-again" military strategists boast about their willingness to incinerate the world in nuclear war rather than tolerate the spread of "atheistic communism." "Christian" senators oppose the Equal Rights Amendment on the grounds that it undermines the family and deprives men of their "right" to come home from work to a fresh martini, a cooked dinner, and a cheerful and compliant wife. And an array of electronic evangelists fill the air waves with relentless exhortations attributing all of America's problems to the Soviet Union or to the "sins" of recent movements for racial, social, and sexual emancipation.

This tortuous transformation of the Sermon on the Mount into exercises in Christian ballistics and bombast has a long, if ignoble, history in the U.S. Racist and anti-semitic hate groups from the Ku Klux Klan of the 1870s to the followers of Father Coughlin in the 1930s made the same transition with ease. Religious leaders led the drive for the Comstock Act of 1873, which banned transmission of sexual or birth control information through the federal mails, with such severity that most experts felt that the Act itself fit its own definition of material that could not be sent through the mails. In 1936, the founder of the Moral Re-Armament Movement, Frank Buchman, thanked heaven for Adolph Hitler because of the Führer's "front line of defense against the anti-Christ of Communism."[1]

In the 1980s, the association between right-wing politics and Christian fundamentalism presents especially sinister possibilities. Nuclear weapons have increased the dangers of such moral arrogance to the final dimension. At the same time, the crises facing the U.S. seem to defy earthly explanations or solutions, lending credence to those who offer the prospect of divine deliverance. The survival of capitalism seems to depend increasingly on maintaining popular loyalty to a system that no longer delivers the goods. Religion offers one world view that might convince middle and working class Americans to suport policies detrimental to their material needs if they can be justified as serving a higher religious purpose. Certainly right wing politicians hope that this will be the case and that their use of the "social" issues of race, gender, sexuality, and religion will win working class support for policies designed to help the wealthy.

1. Sydney Ahlstrom, *A Religious History of the American People* (Yale University Press: New Haven, 1972), p. 926.

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Yet, all fundamentalism is not alike and all religion is not fundamentalism. Religion may provide mystical and personal solutions to systemic social problems, but it can also set personal agendas that demand social policies reflective of divine love and justice. Since WWII, four distinct phases of religion have played an important role in American life. Rather than providing consistent support for right wing goals, American religion has been contested ground encompassing right and left political aspirations. By tracing the history of those phases, we can discover that the current relation between revived religion and the right wing may in fact backfire into a social practice more conducive to opposition to the right wing than to support of it.

Phase I: 1945-1950

Almost alone among the nations of the world, the U.S. experienced a great renewal of religious enthusiasm in the years immediately following WWII. The horrors and dislocations of war, the collapse of pre-war social institutions, and the failure of working class protest to offer a successful alternative form of social organization, all contributed to the popularity of religious answers to social problems in the United States.

The rise of religion in America not only contradicted the experience of other countries, but it made a sharp break with this nation's past as well. After the Civil War, only one in five Americans belonged to an organized church, but better than fifty percent of the adult population claimed such membership by 1948.[2] Between 1910 and 1940, church membership increased only incrementally from 43% to 48% of the population. But by 1950, fifty-five percent belonged to churches, and that figure reached 62% in 1956 before peaking at 69% in 1960.[3] Not only did Americans join churches in unprecedented numbers, but they reached into their pockets to finance the construction of new ones. Between 1945 and 1960 the amount spent on building new churches increased every year, from a "low" of $26 million at the war's end, to a high of $1 billion just fifteen years later.[4]

Impressive in quantitative terms, the post-war religious revival also altered the quality of the religious experience. Modern mass media techniques won new constituencies for traditional fundamentalist beliefs, as exemplified by the preaching of Billy Graham, who led mass rallies in major cities. Badly discredited in the eyes of many Christians by the 1924 Scopes Trial in Tennessee, fundamentalist religion, with its emphasis on the literal truth and infallibility of the Bible, personal conversion experience, faith healing, water baptism in the name of Jesus, and speaking in tongues, won new adherents in the post-war era.

The fundamentalist tradition had often called for simple endorsement of the economic status quo. In the 19th century, many Protestant denominations credited emerging social relations with divine sanction and sacred

2. Merle Curti, *The Growth of American Thought,* 3rd ed. (Harper & Row: New York, 1964), p. 770. Herbert Gutman, *Work, Culture, and Society in Industrializing America,* 1977), p. 106.
3. Ahlstrom,*op. cit.*, p. 952.
4. Ahlstrom,*op. cit.*, p. 953.

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potency. Portraying America as "the Lord's garden," they equated entrepreneurial freedom with scientific and divine laws and attributed poverty and failure to individual failings and sins.[5] The Southern Baptist Convention in 1938 declared the virtues of the American economic system to be evidence of a divine gift and added that Biblical authority sanctioned private property and competitive capitalism.[6]

Yet, fundamentalists in the late 19th and early 20th centuries also came from a class experience that understood the world and its power structure as evil and cited religion as a justification for distance from it. By championing a higher law and a higher authority than mere money and power, fundamentalists helped build unions, create cooperatives, and resist wars. Drawing upon Christ's censure of the rich and the critical tradition of the Reformation, they claimed that Christianity condemned the exploitation and hierarchy of industrial capitalism. One asked "Do you think it is anything short of insulting to God to pretend to believe He makes of the ninety-nine paving material for the one to walk into heaven over?"[7]

Church officials stressed obedience to authority and respect for private property in the gospels, but workers talked about Jesus as a carpenter and they emphasized the egalitarian implications of fellowship in Christ. As Gutman has demonstrated in his work on working class religion, the first generation of industrial workers used the religion of their childhoods to legitimize protest against the conditions of industrial labor. They harped on the sins of the rich and projcted visions of heaven that included fair reward for labor. The newspaper of the American Railway Union in 1888 pointed to Jesus as the first to complain about the misdeeds of wealth. Mrs. P.C. Munger wrote to the *Denver Labor Enquirer* in 1883 that dynamite for industrial sabotage consituted "the last scientific fruit of the Holy Ghost" and she expressed her devout thanks for this "blast of Gabriel's trumpet." Before his execution on charges that he participated in the Haymarket Square bombing, labor martyr Albert Spies insisted that a correct reading of the gospel "did not merely perceive blessings in heaven, but that it also commanded equality and brotherhood among men on earth."[8]

Like the 19th century labor radicals, the farmers who joined the Populist Party in the 1890s felt that religion sanctioned their opposition to industrial capitalism. To a world that preached the survival of the fittest, they affirmed religion that preached the survival of all. They argued that Christ came into the world to teach men to live justly and that they could do so only when wealth was fairly distributed and when the individual farmer and worker got a fair reward for the expenditure of labor. But as Bruce Palmer demonstrates in his book on Southern Populism, *Man Over Money*, these appeals to religion had internal contradictions for the populists. They used religion as a readily

5. Timothy Smith, *Revivalism and Social Reform* (Abindon Press: New York, 1957). Herbert Gutman, "Protestantism and the American Labor Movement," *American Historical Review*, October 1966.

6. Ahlstrom, *op. cit.*, p. 924.

7. Gutman, *Work, Culture, and Society*, pp. 88-90.

8. *Ibid.*

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understood metaphor to aid them in conveying their social message. Yet, what Palmer calls "the logic of a metaphor" led them to a dead end. Having made the issue one of religion, they could not reasonably expect earthly remedies to succeed. They convinced their followers of the righteousness of their cause, but at the same time led them to think that ultimately the solution would have to come from divine rather than human action. For the Populists, religion helped give them legitimacy, but that very legitimacy came on terms that discouraged direct action in this world.[9]

Gutman notes the decline of that type of religious radicalism at the turn of the century, but its utopian elements remained sedimented in twentieth century working class militancy. One can scarcely imagine the socialism of Eugene V. Debs or A. Philip Randolph without those Christian undertones, and certainly most of their followers saw no contradiction between socialism and the kingdom of heaven. Protestant ministers like the Reverend A.J. Muste, who led Unemployed Workers Councils in the 1930s and struggled for peace and racial justice in ensuing years, exemplified the close relation between some strains of American religion and American socialism. If religion functioned as an opiate, it also induced a sense of liberation too compelling to be left entirely to the next world.

Working class militants in the years immediately after WWII drew upon the sedimented legitimacy of radical religion in their challenges to corporations, government, and unions. Between 1945 and 1950 they engaged in mass demonstrations, general strikes, and a variety of direct action protests designed to rewrite the American dream. They wanted to share in the material wealth that their labor created during the war, and they insisted on no return to depression levels of unemployment. The General Motors workers in 1945-1946 had as one of their original strike demands that wage increases come from corporate profits rather than from price increases that victimized fellow workers and consumers. In Stamford, Connecticut; Lancaster, Pennsylvania; Rochester, New York; Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania, and Oakland, California, small disputes between labor and management exploded into massive general strikes in which the united working class of entire cities struck to help fellow memebers of their class. In their resistance to authority on the shop floor and in the streets of industrial cities, they challenged old hierarchies composed of paternalistic employers and government officials. Their emphasis on collective action flaunted a newly realized sense of community and solidarity, and they received the overwhelming support of local clergymen in that effort.

Religious leaders with working class congregations supported these strikes and demonstrations. Significant numbers of clergymen with no direct stake in the disputes favored the strikers as well, as part of their principled commitment to social justice. Ministers in Stamford urged the employers to be "fair and friendly" and to give the workers their due. In Chicago during the 1946

9. Bruce Palmer, *Man Over Money* (University of North Carolina Press: Chapel Hill, 1980).

10. See my *Class and Culture in Cold War America: A Rainbow at Midnight* (Praeger: New York, 1981), pp. 52, 64.

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meatpackers strike, priests walked the picket lines and urged grocery stores to extend credit to strikers. During the general strike in Lancaster, ministers and rabbis participated in town meetings called by the strikers and endorsed the cause of the workers.[10]

Corporate opposition to worker demands could bring the kind of letter that appeared in a Pittsburgh paper in support of the general strike by that city's electrical utility workers and their supporters which asked "Who made the Duquesne Electric Light Company but the poor working man? Now the poor working man must strike and fight for a living wage. No wonder the 19th chapter of St. Matthew in the Bible says 'Then said Jesus unto his disciples — verily I say unto you that a rich man shall hardly ever enter into the Kingdom of Heaven'."[11]

Clergymen standing in the way of the class interest of their congregations found that working class hostility to capitalism could be dircted at them as well. The Association of Catholic Trade Unionists participated in repeated campaigns against CIO leaders reputed to have Communist leanings, only to find Catholic workers resisting them when those leaders had a good record on shop floor issues.[12] And in order to compete for the sympathies of the worker, the ACTU had to have its own program for social justice, a program that hardly counseled timidity in the face of capital.[13] In New York City, Cardinal Spellman personally ordered gravediggers at the Diocesan Cemetary to halt a work stoppage. They obediently kissed his ring — and then calmly resumed their strike.[14]

The workers who waged mass demonstrations and strikes in the post-war era routinely expected support from local clergymen, but the strikers' goals were secular. They spoke of fairness, of the sacrifices made during the war, and of a democracy that would open up the wealth of the few to the grasp of the many. Most importantly, they wanted control over the immediate conditions of work, and they sought a sense of community with other laborers.

They won important material gains, but concessions in the economic sphere led to repressive measures in other areas. Capital could grant higher wages, plentiful consumer goods, and home ownership in return for uninterrupted production and unobstructed control of the economy and the state. Unions became agents of labor peace as their role shifted to enforcement of contracts and policing production. Local governments surrendered power and authority to the federal government; consequently, decision makers less vulnerable to working class protests gained more power. Corporate planning fragmented the working class in factories, and corporate/urban planning dis-

11. *Pittsburgh Sun Telegraph*, September 26, 1946, p. 14.

12. See my *Class and Culture in Cold War America*, ch. 8.

13. Neil Betten, *Catholic Activism and the Industrial Worker* (University of Florida Presses: Gainesville, 1976). Michael Harrington, "Catholics in the Labor Movement," *Labor History*, Fall 1960, pp. 231-263.

14. Harvey Levenstein, *Communism, Anticommunism, and the CIO* (Greenwood Press: Westport, Conn., 1981) p. 176.

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persed it into newly developed suburban neighborhoods.[15] And just as the working class turned to religion for proof of the legitimacy of its goals, the emerging corporate state portrayed its imperatives as the work of God.

Cardinal Mooney of Detroit's Catholic Archdiocese led 7000 people onto Washington Boulevard on May 1, 1948 to pray for the conversion of the entire Russian people in an attempt to end communism through prayer.[16] Because the other side represented "atheism," the American state became the representative of religion. And cloaked in that noble role, the state could be above criticism.

The cold war beat back the emancipatory offensive of working class protest in the late 1940s and replaced a religion of social justice, with a religion that worshipped national destiny. Former missionary Walter Judd could become an "expert" on China policy with the aid of the child of missionaries, Henry Luce of *Time-Life*. New York's Cardinal Spellman emerged as a main architect of U.S. support for the Diem regime in Vietnam, and moral questions about the arms race could be brushed aside by reference to Biblical prophecy and the inherent morality of the American nation.

Phase II: 1950-1960

By the 1950s, religious belief in the U.S. encompassed three distinct identities: fundamentalism, a cult of national destiny, and a cult of self-improvement. Fundamentalists believed in the literal truth of the Bible, felt obliged to spread its message, and knew the correctness of their position as a result of a personal conversion experience. The cult of national destiny embraced a kind of civil religion in which God's favor became manifest in the success of the nation-state. And upward mobility and self-improvement took on renewed religious sanction in the hands of theologians like Norman Vincent Peale, who translated the "good news" of the resurrection into a self-help device to advance one's career. These three forms of religious identity often overlapped; parts of all three could appear in the same individual. Each borrowed legitimacy from the others, and anyone wishing to speak in serious terms to the American people had to be aware of the deep power that this exotic trinity held over the national psyche.

To politicians, references to God helped unite competing groups. Conservatives could be won to sanction high taxes and government spending in the name of fighting communism. Liberals could be induced to weaken unions and purge them of class conscious leaders in order to secure unanimity on foreign policy. And even dissident groups could win melioristic gains by arguing that such gains retarded the spread of communism.

Religion merged with the cult of national destiny during President Eisenhower's inaugural parade, where wealthy campaign contributors showed off their jewelry and minks in expensive limousines lined up behind "God's Float" at the head of the procession.[17] In a country where 90% of those inter-

15. See John Mollenkopf, "The Postwar Politics of Urban Development," in William Tabb and Larry Sawers eds., *Marxism and the Metropolis,* (Oxford University Press: New York, 1978).

16. *Detroit Times*, May 1, 1948, p. 4c.

17. Curti, *op. cit.*, p. 771.

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viewed in one survey said they prayed regularly and where 60% of those respondents said they fully expected to go to heaven, political goals became legitimized through religious rhetoric. Congress inserted the words "under God" into the Pledge of Allegiance in 1954 and two years later, "In God We Trust" became the official motto of the United States. This new "civil regilion," as sociologist Robert Bellah called it, enabled the state to present its cold war aims and economic policies as part of a Divine plan beyond question or debate.[18]

As one might expect, this emphasis on the public morality of the state tended to compromise the internal religious experiences of individuals. Although Billy Graham's fundamentalist rallies drew large crowds, for the average American, old religious imperatives about behavior and character increasingly gave way to personality adjustment. People might identify with the emotional intensity of fundamentalism, but their theology more likely reflected the self-congratulatory cheerleading of Norman Vincent Peale or his secular equivalent, Dale Carnegie. In a world where meaningful ties to class, neighborhood, ethnic group, and family had been shattered by the new realities of consumer capitalism, a religion of upward mobility encouraged adjustment, amicability, optimism, and conformity.

The expanding economy of the 1950s needed people with many desires and few restraints. The religions that encouraged a sense of self-confidence and upward mobility also helped shape the consumer mentality. Above all, the focus of religious activity became contered on human beings and their actions, with less left to divine intervention. The "new fundamentalism" of Billy Graham, the cult of national destiny, and the worship of individual success all drew upon traditional religious language, but all transformed the meaning of traditional religious experience.

Religion eased the alienation from others engendered by the fragmentation of surburban consumer society. Its uncritical acceptance of authority mirrored the rationalization of the work world. Individuals searching for meaning in their lives could be directed inward, and the inequities of society explained away as God's will. Remnants of fundamentalism originally designed to sanction separation from the power structure of this world came to be used as a means of acceptance of that power structure in the name of higher authority.

The very pervasiveness of the religious experience diluted it. President Eisenhower illustrated the essence of that change in his 1954 pronouncement that "our government makes no sense unless it is founded on a deeply felt religious faith — and I don't care what it is."[19] Religion makes no sense unless you care deeply what that faith is; to embrace it for outward appearances only leads to an impoverished religious experience incapable of securing either social justice or individual assurance. By 1960, religious expression reigned supreme in America, but it did so by transforming a sincere religious tradition

18. Robert Bellah and Phillip E. Hammond, *Varieties of Civil Religion* (Harper & Row: San Francisco, 1980), pp. 3-26. Ahlstrom, *op. cit.*, p. 954.

19. Ahlstrom, *op. cit.*, p. 954.

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into a hymn to national destiny and an excuse for unrestrained lust after material rewards.

Phase III: 1950-1975

The one group of fundamentalist Christians incapable of shedding the critical religious traditions of the 19th century came from Black America. Social criticism and religion went hand in hand in churches created as a response to slavery and segregation. References to crossing the River Jordan in slave songs carried coded messages about emancipation here on earth, and the emphasis in Black churches on ethical behavior as a reflection of God's love and on fellowship in Christ demanded impatience with racism and exploitation in this society. Black churches like Reverend Richard Allen's African Methodist Episcopal Church, founded in Philadelphia in 1794, originated as a protest against the refusal of the white churches to integrate. Black ministers like Henry Highland Garnet led the abolition movement of the 19th century to a more militant posture, and in large and small communities the Black Church functioned as the key community institution.

In the 1960s, the theology of the Black Church reached out to white Americans in important ways because of the civil rights movement. That not only kept alive socially conscious religion, but it completely reshaped the American dream as well, as millions of Blacks and whites adopted it as a guide to action and a framework for belief.

Martin Luther King's theology brilliantly focused on the emancipatory elements in American fundamentalism. Whatever conservatism can be derived from the Bible's lists of prohibited conduct can be more than offset by its ethical imperatives. As Michael Lienesch notes, "whether their right-wing leaders like it or not, conservative Christians worship a populist prophet, the son of a carpenter who preached to the poor, who drove the money-changers from the temple, and who blessed the peacemakers."[20] Although a sophisticated liberal religious thinker himself, Dr. King fashioned an appeal based on the Bible that spoke directly to the worldview and sense of legitimacy held by fundamentalists. His sermon, "The Drum Major Instinct," delivered on February 4, 1968 demonstrates better than any other single piece of evidence how King blended the contrasting strains of religious fundamentalism, civil religion, and the cult of self improvement into a coherent radical creed.

Starting with the 35th verse of the 10th chapter of the Book of Mark, King draws attention to the request to Jesus by James and John that they be allowed to sit on his right side and on his left side. Noting that they might be quickly condemned for their vanity and selfishness, King asks acknowledgement of the fact that we share these same tendencies, namely the desire to be recognized as special and important. And King points out that Jesus did not reproach the two apostles for their request, but instead said that he could not grant their wish, they would have to earn it for themselves. They could earn it, Jesus told them, by serving others.

20. Michael Lienesch, "Right-Wing Religion: Christian Conservatism as a Political Movement," *Political Science Quarterly*, 97, Fall 1982, p. 425.

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King goes on to say that this passage speaks to our innate desires for recognition and success, which we so often channel into pursuit of worldly gain or power over others. He called it "the drum major instinct" because it evidenced a satisfaction from being special, from being out in front of the parade. But he said that we misuse this instinct when we let it feed our senses of racial superiority, selfish nationalism, or egoistic self-importance. The way to be important and special that Jesus gave us, according to King, came from serving others. And in that way, everyone can succeed, because everyone can serve.

Redefining success as collective and social rather than as individual and exclusive, King then drew direct political conclusions. One did not serve others by using racism to feel superior. One did not serve others by embracing the false pride of national chauvinism. One did not serve others by gaining wealth from the exploitation of labor. To serve others, one had to oppose war, racism, exploitation, and poverty. "The God that I worship didn't call America into the world to do the things that she's doing in Vietnam" he argued, and he went on to allege that a perverted use of the drum major instinct had led the U.S. to commit more war crimes than almost any other nation. One could serve others by changing the world, by ending the war, and by demanding that the nation treat its citizens and others with justice and love.

"The Drum Major Instinct" concluded with direct references to the gospel of success. King anticipated his own death, and, in discussing what he wanted said at his funeral, he turned to the standards by which Jesus said whole nations would be judged, "I want you to be able to say on that day that I did try to feed the hungry. I want you to be able to say on that day that I did try in my life to clothe those that were naked. I want you to say that on that day that I did try to visit those that were in prison. I want you to say that I tried to love and serve humanity. Yes, if you want to say that I was a drum major, say that I was a drum major for justice, say that I was a drum major for peace. And all of the other shallow things will not matter. I won't have any money to leave behind. I won't have any of the fine and luxurious things of life to leave behind. But I just want to leave a committed life behind."[21] They might disagree with his conclusions, but any American raised on religious fundamentalism, the gospel of success, or the cult of national destiny knew what King meant. In fact, his rhetoric could only work in a society obsessed with the goals of success and importance. King's genius came from the ability to invert the argument and transform the ideology of individualism and hierarchy into one of collectivity and service. The very qualities of legitimacy that made religion effective in opposing social change, also made it a powerful weapon in the hands of those, like King, who could speak about social issues in the legitimate language of religion.

The civil rights movement drew upon the religious traditions of America in significant ways. Non-violent passive resistance drew its inspiration from the Sermon on the Mount, and demonstrators regularly exhibited their willing-

21. Martin Luther King, Jr., "The Drum Major Instinct," sermon from February 4, 1968.

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ness to endure suffering in the hope of awakening the humanity slumbering within the oppressors. We know all too well the times in which those hopes were misplaced, times when white racism displayed its satanic side in beatings, bombings, and burnings. Less remembered, but no less true, were the successes of that moral crusade — the white woman in Greensboro who unexpectedly spoke up in praise of the Black college students at the first sit-in in 1960, the law enforcement officers and firemen who found the moral burdens of repressing the movement to be intolerable, and the sense of moral responsibility awakened in white people all across the country as they viewed the violence in the South.[22]

As Sara Evans writes in *Personal Politics*, involvement in the civil rights movement led, for some, to a series of experiences that helped create the anti-war, student, and women's movements of the 1960s and 1970s. Religion provided a formative influence in the lives of many of the southern women whose moral choices built those movements. Anne Braden, whose courageous acts for peace, civil rights, and feminism pointed the way for others, recalled the church of her youth as "the most far reachingly decent influence in my walled-in childhood and probably the most radical in my life."[23] Sue Thrasher, Casey Cason, and others came to the movement from the Methodist Church and they found the transition a logical one because political action made good the moral promissory notes issued in the churches of their childhoods. And within that movement, a search for a "beloved community" helped shape its other political goals.

The appeal of the civil rights movement went beyond those who actually participated as activists. Because religion viewed what "should be" as at least as important as "what is," the religious underpinnings of American consciousness made social action and the projection of moral utopias a legitimate endeavor. When "born-again" Jimmy Carter said that the civil rights movement was the best thing that ever happened to him and to the South, he was not just fishing for votes. The liberation that the movement and its agenda brought to individuals North and South made it possible to cast off old guilts and embrace a more moral present. At the 1963 March on Washington for Jobs and Justice, A. Philip Randolph correctly described Martin Luther King as "the moral leader of our nation." Randolph insisted that the civil rights revolution would fail if it did not lead to a moral revolution elevating the needs of the human personality above the needs of property.

The social movements of the 1960s had many shortcomings. They tended to view racism and war as aberrations in an otherwise good society rather than taking a more systemic approach. They too easily made demons out of their opponents without understanding the complex forces behind social problems. And, particularly in their student phases, they displayed an elitism and self-serving arrogance that could offer little to the reconstruction of society along more humane lines. But whatever their limits, the social movement of the 1960s and 1970s addressed the King-Randolph agenda of a moral revolu-

22. Howell Raines, *My Soul Is Rested* (Penguin: London, 1983).
23. Sara Evans, *Personal Politics* (Knopf: New York, 1979), pp. 29-30, 34-35.

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tion designed to place human dignity ahead of material reward, and in the process they brought to the surface once again the repressed utopianism of American religion.

Phase IV: 1975-?

Both the failures and successes of the 1960s paved the way for the resurgence of right wing politics and religion in the 1970s. The assassination of Dr. King, the failures of alternative communities and alternative politics, and the demoralization engendered by the Vietnam War, all contributed to the erosion of the moral imperatives of the 1960s. And the very strengths that religion gave to those movements for social change also proved a liability when it came to fashioning alternative policies. It is not hard to have a clear moral position on war or racism, but it is more difficult to know what moral path to follow to end those evils. Questions of interests and aims may not be reducible to biblical questions of right and wrong, and the logic of the metaphor used by these movements had its own impact, just as the populists found about their religious metaphor in the 19th century. Martin Luther King, the opponent of American imperialism and enemy of class oppression, could be transformed into Martin Luther King the non-violent saint, a man too good to live in this world by the standards of religious iconography. His martyrdom made such a convenient symbol; he could be linked in the popular mind to no particular set of policies but to his shared martyrdom with two very un-saintly characters, the Kennedy brothers.

Yet, the movement's successes should not go unheralded. They created a backlash that fueled the New Right of the 1980s. In the course of emancipatory struggles of the 1960s and 1970s new variants of emancipation came to the fore. The civil rights movement led to affirmative action and busing, social and cultural changes sparked the growth of the women's movement and of gay liberation, and causes like abortion on demand became heir to the struggles of the 1960s. Individuals threatened by those social changes, or interested in a reactionary response to them, found a source of legitimacy in the revival of fundamentalist religion. Media emphasis on Watergate as the sin of individuals encouraged a search for better people to be leaders rather than to a re-evaluation of the whole system.. Under those circumstances, Charles Colson could enjoy the most celebrated conversion since that of St. Paul, Eldridge Cleaver could get his soul off ice by shilling for the Reverend Moon, and a political unknown like Jimmy Carter could appear to be running against the "system" merely because he read the Bible. The election of Ronald Reagan and the use of emotional social issues to defeat liberal senators in 1980 seemed to herald a significant shift back to an alliance between religion and the right wing.

There is some evidence to indicate that the revival of fundamentalist religion as a prop of right wing politics has been less than spontaneous. The combination of popular disgust with the war in Vietnam, the disgrace of Richard Nixon, and the declining economy threatened the Right with serious

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credibility problems with the public, particularly among the middle and lower classes. Fund raisers and politically oriented preachers realized that religion could be used to play on anxieties caused by the new realities. Fund raiser Paul Weyrich has boasted that emotional issues about sexuality and race win converts for the right in a way the lectures on capital formation do not. Richard Viguerie contended that the success of the New Right in the 1980 election came from imitating the Old Left. Just as the issue of race in the 19th century enabled the southern elite to turn back the challenge of populism, the New Right and its corporate supporters use social fears as a means of winning a mass constituency for policies designed to help the rich.[24]

Despite their claims of 130 million "born-again" supporters, the New Right draws from a pool of about 30 million Americans who consider themselves fundamentalist. Ten percent of these are Catholics, twenty-five percent are black, and two-thirds are female. Even if they wholeheartedly supported the whole New Right agenda (and polls show they do not), these fundamentalists have other identities, as workers, minorities, or women, that make them receptive to politics more conducive to their self-interests. In fact, fundamentalist support for Reagan in 1980 actually measured much less than originally supposed. Carter received a greater percentage of votes from fundamentalists than he did from other white Protestants, and his decline in votes from 1976 measured less among them than his decline among other religious groups.[25] Campaign strategists for conservative Paul Trible found to their surprise in his 1982 race for the Senate in Virginia that an endorsement from Jerry Falwell would have hurt the candidate because Falwell had the highest negative identification of any individual in the state. Even in the 1980 elections, some conservative candidates found that support from the religious right hurt, rather than helped, their image.[26]

Yet, religion does play an important role in right wing politics. A 1979 Gallup Poll found that 94% of U.S. citizens believed in God and that 71% affirmed a belief in life after death. No other country showed that level of faith, and the right wing has been quite sensitive to the implications of translating those beliefs into reactionary politics. Jerry Falwell finds heavenly sanction for capitalism in the Book of Proverbs, and across the country the religious Right leads actions against abortion rights, integration, gay rights, and the peace movement.[27] But the movement is not monolithic. It has internal contradictions. And other religious traditions also compete for public attention and acceptance. The Catholic Bishops who denounce nuclear war and question the inequities of capitalism, the laymen and church leaders active for peace in Central America, and even the National Association of Evangelicals, whose convention refused to endorse Reagan's foreign policy, all testify to the variety

24. Weyrich is quoted by Lienesch, *op. cit.*, p. 413. Viguerie is quoted by Lienesch, *op. cit.*, p. 410.

25. Seymour Martin Lipset and Earl Raab, "The Election and the Evangelicals," in Herbert Vetter ed., *Speak Out Against The New Right* (Boston: Beacon Press, 1982), p. 67.

26. *Ibid.*

27. *Atlanta Constitution*, July 31, 1983, p. 18A.

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of opinions that find religious justification.

This is not to say that all fears of the New Right are unwarranted. Religious fundamentalism may yet be the instrument of fascism in the U.S. It uses a literal reading of the Bible to identify convenient scapegoats for what are in actuality structural economic problems. It plays on the cult of national destiny to sanction "just wars" which turn out to be almost any wars waged by the just. And it draws upon the worship of self-improvement to help persuade Americans that whatever is in their self-interest, whatever wins, is therefore moral. But just as the religious revival of the 1950s merely prepared the way for the "Drum Major Instinct" of the 1960s, the current unholy alliance between religion and the right wing may only set the stage for a new approach to the complex moral and social questions raised by the weaknesses of the economy and the state.

The right wing may be playing a dangerous game by asking Americans to view society in religious terms. In the end, the plutocracy they seek bears little resemblance to the rhetoric used to justfy it. As individual Christians ruminate on biblical authority, they may recoil from the greed and heartlessness that fuels the New Right agenda. They may find that Jerry Falwell reminds them less of the carpenter from Nazareth than of one of the pharisees.

The nuclear freeze movement, opponents of the war in Central America, and the numerous coalitions working to house the homeless and feed the hungry also represent a religious tradition with a long history in politics. The Bible does say that the poor will always be with you, but many people who have read it seem to think otherwise, like the United Church of Christ minister who told CBS news last winter that charity for the poor could never substitute for economic justics.[28]

Any movement interested in justice, fair reward for labor, and the full flowering of human potential would be foolish to overlook the sources of emancipatory thought and behavior deeply rooted in the American religious experience. Biblical metaphors have been powerful, although dangerous tools with which to build social movements. They may ultimately leave too little to human beings and too much to God; they may ultimately simplify complex social problems into inadequate moral formulations. But from the evangelical Protestants who built the labor movement to the 20th century followers of Dr. King, some Americans have always perceived the truth of the "Drum Major Instinct." It is nice to be important, it is nice to be recognized, it is nice to be first. But the only way for everyone to be first is to have a nation that wants to be first in peace, first in justice, and first in love.

28. Reverend Buck Jones, quoted on CBS News, December 18, 1982.

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ADORNO'S THEORY OF RELIGION

by Rudolf J. Siebert

Adorno discussed everything, including religion, within the framework of Western Marxism,[1] which had reactivated the philosophical aspects of Marx's work only at the high price of regression into Hegelian idealism. It is thus not surprising that he returned to Hegel's philosophy of religion. Yet, while Hegel avoided discussing dissonances in religious reality in the context of declining Western Civilization, Adorno emphasized them.[2] He continued Hegel's analysis of the dichotomy between religious and secular consciousness, but whereas the purpose of Hegel's philosophy of religion was to reconcile religion and reason, revelation and enlightenment, salvation and emancipation, Adorno sought to differentiate them. Where Hegel sought a balance between religious and secular consciousness, Adorno put all emphasis on secular consciousness.

According to Hegel's *Phenomenology of the Spirit*, religion is consciousness of the Absolute.[3] While for medieval theologians this relation was not really essential, modern Protestant theology is concerned with it even more than with God as such. Hegel acknowledged the modern position, i.e., that God cannot be considered separate from humanity's subjective spirit.[4] The reason for acknowledging this, however, was not, as modern theologians assert, that God is unknown, but because God is essentially spirit — a knowing subject. Thus, the relation between God's infinite, and humanity's finite, spirit underlies all religion.

In Hegel's view, no one is so estranged from humanity as to have no religion at all.[5] Even hating religion presupposes preoccupation with it. What matters, however, is the relation of infinite to finite consciousness. In modern times, scientific, aesthetic, social, and political consciousness, as well as the experience of the Absolute, take form within this relation. Before modern philosophy can reconcile faith and enlightenment, it must work through these interconnections.

Unlike Hegel, Adorno overlooked these relations and focused instead on their social consequences. He was interested in cult only insofar as it survived in secularized form in modern art — particularly in modern music and

1. Alfred Schmidt, "Die 'Zeitschrift für Sozialforschung' Geschichte und Gegenwärtige Bedeutung," in Max Horkheimer, *Zeitschrift für Sozialforschung* (Kösel Verlag: München, 1970), p. 9.

2. Theodor W. Adorno and Eugen Kogon, "Offenbarung oder autonome Vernunft," in *Frankfurter Hefte* 13, 7 (June 1958), pp. 397-402.

3. Georg W.F. Hegel, *Vorlesungen über die Philosophie der Geschichte* (Fr. Frommann Verlag: Stuttgart, 1961), pp. 43-47.

4. G.W.F. Hegel, *Vorlesungen über die Philosophie der Religion* (Friedrich Frommann Verlag: Stuttgart-Bad Cannstatt, 1965), vol. I, pp. 24-36.

5. *Ibid.*, pp. 23-24.

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drama.[6] Although for Adorno religion was also consciousness of the Absolute,[7] the Marxist approach remained central in his theory. His appeal to an Other, different from this world as nature and history, had primarily a social-philosophical impetus and led him to a more positive evaluation of certain theological trends. Yet Adorno avoided the temptation of transforming his critique of religion into a new religion,[8] thus repeating the dialectic of enlightenment — the turning of enlightenment into myth. He opposed the tendency of modern consciousness to elevate the fate of theological ideas into a *theologicum*, because he felt it led to a lack of theological meaning. For Adorno, the means for such an experience was negative dialectics — the very essence of negative knowledge.[9]

Pre-Hegelian materialists explained religion in terms of humanity's break with itself. Adorno located the ground of religion in humanity's consciousness of the negation of the negation of self-consciousness, in the awareness of the ability to transcend limitations, to overcome the gap between existence and true nature, to become independent and free.[10] The negation of the negation of humanity's self-consciousness did not lead, for Adorno, to a positive *Absolutum*. This is why he was in solidarity with theology at the time of its ruin.[11] Enlightenment leaves behind almost no residuals of the metaphysical and theological truth content, thereby causing metaphysics and theology to immigrate into what Adorno called micrology as a refuge from the totality.

According to Adorno, totality becomes a radical evil in the totally administered society.[12] Totality is the principle of domination of humanity over nature and itself, inflated into the Absolute.[13] A micrological view of the world as nature and society demolishes the shell of the particular and exposes the fraud that the particular is merely an example of the universal. Since the whole is untruth, metaphysics and theology can only survive in the most minute and inconsequential particulars (i.e., in what Hegel called lazy existence: one indifferent to or opposed to the universal). According to Adorno, metaphysics and theology become correctives to the objective reason which informs the administered world.

6. Theodor W. Adorno, *Quasi Una Fantasia* (Suhrkamp Verlag: Frankfurt a.M., 1963), pp. 153-154, 306-338, 339-364; "Über Mahler," in *Frankfurter Hefte*, 15/9, pp. 643-653; *Dialektik des Engagements* (Suhrkamp Verlag: Frankfurt a.M. 1973), pp. 22-29; *Versuch das 'Endspiel' zu Verstehen* (Suhrkamp Verlag: Frankfurt a.M., 1972), pp. 167-214; and "Parataxis. Zur späten Lyrik Hölderlins," in Jochen Schmidt, *Über Hölderlin* (Inselverlag: Frankfurt a.M., 1970), pp. 339-378.

7. Max Horkheimer, "Foreword," in Jay, *The Dialectical Imagination* (Little Brown and Co: Bantam, 1973), pp. xi-xii.

8. Klaus Rohring, "Theodor W. Adorno," in Wilhelm Schmidt, *Die Religion der Religionkritik* (Claudius Verlag: Munchen, 1972), pp. 31-32.

9. Theodor W. Adorno, *Negative Dialektik* (Luchterhand Verlag: Neuwied, 1966), part II, p. 396.

10. Adorno, "Offenbarung," pp. 484-498; Hegel, *Vorlesungen über die Philosophie der Geschichte*, pp. 43-47.

11. Adorno, *Negative Dialektik* p. 398.

12. Theodor W. Adorno, *Drei Studien zu Hegel* (Suhrkamp Verlag: Frankfurt a.M., 1969), p. 78.

13. *Ibid.*, p. 104.

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Adorno was a man of the Enlightenment, but not a prisoner of its ideology. Along with Jean Améery, Elias Canetti, George Steiner, and Ernst Bloch, he was one of those unbelieving Jews who sought, in a century without God, for a new meaning of existence.[14] The brickle of being chosen by God remains even when Jews try to repress it or transform it into a program of atheistic anthropocentricity and eschatology. Adorno's theory of religion was the climax of his search for meaning in the context of Horkheimer's critical theory.

In Horkheimer's view, part of the high price the modern world may have to pay for technological progress in the totally administered society is human coldness.[15] Adorno saw this coldness as the principle of bourgeois subjectivity which made possible Auschwitz and Hiroshima. To Horkheimer, this bourgeois principle is the very opposite of the Christian principle of free and loving subjectivity. In the struggle with the bourgeois principle, the Christian principle lost out. All of this and more was spelled out by Adorno during a debate with Eugen Kogon and Walter Dirks in Münster (1956) on "Revelation or Autonomous Reason." In that debate, Adorno also summed up what he had been thinking about religion since his early work on Kierkegaard (1929-30).[16]

Like Hegel and Marx, Adorno felt he lived in a world-historical transition period between the old Western Civilization and a new world. He sought to help bring about this new world with his theory of religion as a premise of all criticism of personality, family, society, state, art, philosophy, science, and technology. Thus, with Horkheimer, he wrote in the *Dialectic of Enlightenment:* "Politics, which, be it even in a highly unreflected way, does not preserve theology in itself, remains, no matter how skillful it may be, in the last analysis, mere business."[17] Whether God exists and if someone has faith is important, because theology stands behind all human action, not as the traditional science of the divine or even of God, but as consciousness that the world is mere appearance. For Adorno, theology was the hope that the injustice characterizing the present world can be eliminated.

Adorno felt that none of the theological contents of Christianity (e.g., the trinity, incarnation, redemption, resurrection, miracles, eternal happiness or damnation) which Hegel saw withering away and tried to preserve by translating them from their mythological into a dialectical form, could remain unchanged. All theological contents must emigrate out of religious consciousness and into the continually expanding secular consciousness. He pointed out that, during the Middle Ages and Antiquity, religious represen-

14. Max Horkheimer, *Die Sehnsucht nach dem ganz Anderen* (Furche Verlag: Hamburg, 1971), p. 60.

15. H.C.F. Mansilla, "Zwei Begegnungen in der Schweizt," in *Frankfurter Hefte*, vol. 28, no. 4 (April 1973), p. 240; Georg W.F. Hegel, *Grundlienien des Rechts* (Friedrich Frommann Verlag: Stuttgart-Bad Cannstatt, 1954), pp. 177-178; Horkheimer, *Notizen, 1950-1969 und Dämmerung* (S. Fischer Verlag: Frankfurt, 1974), pp. 141-142; *Aus der Pubertat. Novellen und Tagebuchblätter* (Kösel Verlag: München, 1974), pp. 53-244; and *Die Sehnsucht, op. cit.*, pp. 9-89.

16. Theodor W. Adorno, *Kierkegaard* (Suhrkamp Verlag: Frankfurt a.M. 1962), chap. VII.

17. Max Horkheimer, *Die Sehnsucht nach dem ganz Anderen*, pp. 59-62.

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tations were rich and concretely elaborated. Contemporary opinion, however, sees the life of modern people and the immanence of this world as resembling a glass house, through whose walls they can look at an eternally unchangeable *philosophia perennis*. In such a situation, faith in revelation is even less widespread than during Hegel's time and can be kept alive only by desperate abstraction.

In Adorno's perspective, to defend revelation in the 18th century had a meaning completely different than it has today. Then, theologians were concerned with defending traditionally-given teaching content — the dogmas of the trinity, incarnation, etc., against the attack of autonomous reason. This reason would not accept anything other than what could withstand its own test. Faith had to be defended against reason by rational means. This task was hopeless from the very beginning, and the rational argumentation Christian apologists used appropriated the very same hostile principle of autonomous reason against which they sought to defend Christian relevation.

Adorno charged that theologians in late bourgeois society preach stabilization of bourgeois society by the religion of revelation. People listen to them because they feel it would be good to have revelation, given the utter confusion surrounding them. Like Hegel, Adorno believed that it was the need for orientation rather than for truth which motivated people to return to the religion of their fathers. He found the same motivation in his contemporaries who returned to positive religion. He admitted also that such a return may be sparked by the hope that the disenchanted modern world may be given new meaning which can free humankind for full participation in their lives. Unlike Hegel, who wanted to save revelation through rational reflection upon it, contemporary apologists want to rescue revelation by rejecting autonomous reason itself. Adorno noticed in contemporary theologians an inclination to obscurantism much more inexorable and evil than all the limited orthodoxies Hegel felt were hostile to enlightenment and idealistic philosophy. According to Adorno, this occurred because contemporary theologians believe in their fundamental dogmas even less than theologians in Hegel's day.

The sacrifice of intellect to the acceptance of revelation has been socialized in late bourgeois society, for too much thinking makes adaptation difficult in the administered world and produces suffering. According to Adorno, this lack of rationality resulted in the proliferation of apparatuses and means of domination. The consciousness of contemporary humanity no longer even contemplates the possibility of a rational society. With Horkheimer, Adorno knew that to escape domination, self-reflection is mandatory. Such self-reflection of human reason cannot happen by a leap of faith, as Kierkegaard suggested. Rather, reason must attempt to determine rationality itself; it must recognize its own natural structure. Although this motif is not foreign to the great world religions, Adorno felt it must go through the secularization process, or it will contribute to the same darkening of the world it seeks to avert.

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The renaissance of the religion of revelation appeals strongly to the notion of commitment. For Adorno, however, only weakness seeks commitment. The urge for commitment is, in reality, not directed toward the dignity of humankind. When humankind is unable to realize its own humanity, desperate fetishization of the extant social conditions in bourgeois and socialist society occurs.

Adorno believed that the turn to transcendence in the religion of revelation in late capitalist society functioned together with astrology, occultism, and the like to cover up the social hopelessness prevalent in bourgeois society.[18] This turn to transcendence and the reactionary mode of behavior connected with it is based upon the world's division into two blocks of states rigidly opposed to each other. Every individual in them feels threatened with ruin. For Adorno, the innerworldly fear produced by this constant threat of destruction is hypostatized as existential or possibly transcendent anxiety, since there seems to be nothing available in the present to avert it.

Adorno was aware that whenever religion is accepted for any other reason except its own truth content, it undermines itself. God's absolute Spirit did not prevent World War I or II or Auschwitz, nor will it prevent World War III. The very fact that positive religions today so willingly use internationally or nationally conditioned fears for their own external advantage attests to their intrinsic desperation.

In Adorno's perspective, the irrationalism of the positive religion of revelation was not always present. At its medieval height, the Christian religion of revelation rejected William of Ocham's nominalistic teaching of the double truth as self-destructive. The great scholastics achieved dignity precisely because they neither absolutized nor outlawed the notion of reason. It was in the age of nominalism that theologians moved to outlaw and degrade reason. As religious faith loses harmony with knowledge, or at least loses fruitful tension with it, it further loses its cogency, duress, and pressing invitation.

In the contemporary period, the abyss between the traditional religion of revelation and knowledge grows ever wider and deeper. Adorno felt the abyss had become so deep that people no longer even recognized it, particularly in the U.S. Religion and knowledge exist as two separate entitites in late bourgeois society.

Adorno saw the break between the social model of the great world religions and today's bourgeois and socialist society as most decisive. Traditional religions were built on visible agricultural conditions or a commodity economy. Fundamental categories of traditional religions are not contemporaneous with the base structure of modern society, however. In this sense, Adorno's theory of religion was materialist and, therefore, critical and scientific in the Marxian sense.

For example, the notion of the "daily bread" in the "Our Father" prayer was colored by the experience of scarcity through uncertain and insufficient

18. Max Horkheimer and Theordor W. Adorno, *Dialectic of Enlightenment* (The Seabury Press: New York, 1972), pp. 23-24; Adorno, *Quasi Una Fantasia*,, pp. 312-315, 317-318, 319-321.

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material production. The notion cannot be simply transmitted to contemporary bourgeois society with its bread factories, its overproduction, and its depressive convulsions. In bourgeois or socialist society, famines are social and not natural catastrophes. The Christian notion of "the neighbor" who is to be loved is also non-contemporaneous by the modern experience. This notion applied to groups in which members knew each other face to face. Help for the neighbor, urgent as it remains in the bourgeois world, is inconsiderable in relation to praxis' going beyond the mere immediacy of human relations to qualitatively change the world.

Yet, words like "daily bread" or "neighbor" cannot be simply eliminated from the *Evangelium* so as to express the revealed teachings in contemporary terms. If revealed teachings are adapted to the changed course of history, the authority of divine revelation is challenged. To do so would plunge the religion of revelation into complete indefiniteness; the religion of revelation would be totally liquidated. Therefore, Adorno saw no other possibility in the present historical transition period than extreme asceticism against any kind of faith in revelation. He strongly recommended prohibition against making any images of the Absolute. The unbelieving Jew Adorno remained as faithful to this Mosaic prohibition as any pious Jew of the past.

Neither Adorno nor Horkheimer could say anything positive about God. They believed the critical theorist could not represent the Absolute. Speaking about the Absolute, all that can be said is that the present world is a relative one; by saying what the world is, the critical theorist expresses what God is not. In this Adorno and Horkheimer stand in the great tradition of Western negative theology.

Adorno hesitated to admit his solidarity with Christian theologians, fearing that he would further divorce critical theory as negative theology from Christian positive theology, rather than to demonstrate their convergence. Nevertheless, he acknowledged, along with Christian theologians, the hope, longing and impulse that no person ever be hungry, that wars be abolished, and that concentration camps be eliminated. In these simple hopes consists the positive moment of Adorno's otherwise negative theology, the desire for and impetus toward universal justice, peace, freedom, solidarity, love and reconciliation.

Adorno defined philosophy as the attempt to look at all things from the standpoint of redemption.[19] Human cognition has no other light, for everything else eventually exhausts itself in mimetic construction and thus remains merely a piece of positivist technique. The world must be seen clearly as it will appear in the messianic light: displaced, alienated and contradictory. Such a perspective must be gained without arbitrariness and violence and by being completely in touch with the objectives — an utterly impossible task. Any awareness stems from what exists already, but it is inevitably affected by the same defacement, distortion, and indigence which it intends to escape in the first

19. Theodor W. Adorno, *Minima Moralia* (Suhrkamp Verlag: Frankfurt a.M., 1980), pp. 333-334.

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place. The more passionately thought tries to seal itself off from its being conditioned by capitalist society and history for the sake of the Unconditional, the more it falls into the evil world.

The truth of Adorno's life and work was the death of the innocent victims of Auschwitz and capitalist history in general. With Hegel, Marx, Kierkegaard, and contemporary critical political theologians, Adorno fought against bourgeois religion (non-redemptive Christendom).[20] He tried to overcome not only the dialectic of enlightenment and emancipation, but also that of religion. He struggled against evil religion, which gilds the ongoing catastrophe of capitalist history, but he welcomed good religion which he linked with the impulse toward justice.

Adorno called things by their name, so that they would disappear. But, he could not call God by his name. Thus, the quest for the Absolute remained, without which there can be no truth and no redemption and no truly human consciousness. In the tradition of mystical negative theology, Adorno negated God for God's sake. He withdrew love from creation, Creator, Trinity, God, so that it could be free for the Absolute beyond the Absolute. He engaged in idology — the destruction of the idolatry of race, nation, charismatic leader, and commodity fetishism. All this may be called a mystical atheism in the Absolute. Adorno's negative faith and negative theology express the apocalyptic-eschatological hope that the murderer may ultimately not triumph over the innocent victim and that the destroyer may be destroyed.

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20. Johann B. Metz, *Zur Theologie der Welt* (Chr. Kaiser Verlag: Munchen, 1968), chap. 5; Egbert Höflich, "Karl Marx für die Kirche," in *Frankfurter Hefte*, vol. 14, no. 22 (November 1966), pp. 777-785; "Heilsverkündigung as politische Gewissensbildung," in *Frankfurter Hefte*, vol. 24, no. 12 (December 1969), pp. 843-854; Walter Kasper, "Politische Utopie und christliche Hoffnung," in *Frankfurter Hefte*, vol. 24, no. 8 (August 1969), pp. 563-572; Friedrich Heer, "Hegel und die Jugend," in *Frankfurter Hefte*, vol. 22, no. 5 (May 1967), p. 324; Johann B. Metz, *Jenseits bürgerlicher Religion* (Grünewald: Mainz, 1980), chaps. I, II, III, V, VI; Rudolf J. Siebert, *Hegel's Philosophy of History: Theological, Humanistic and Scientific Elements* (University Press of America: Washington, D.C., 1979), chaps. I, II, III; *Horkheimer's Critical Sociology of Religion: The Relative and the Transcendent* (University Press of America: Washington, D.C., 1979), chaps. I, II, III, IV, V, VIII; *From Critical Theory of Society to Theology of Communicative Praxis* (University Press of America: Washington, D.C., 1979).

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SYMPOSIUM ON RELIGION AND POLITICS

Recently the following question was sent to a number of individuals. The 21 responses we received are printed below in alphabetical order.

David Gross

The high expectations of Enlightenment empiricists and materialists, as well as the heady hopes of the Young Hegelians, have been disappointed: religion has not been set aside like an old set of clothing that no longer fits. Religion continues to play a large part in many of the most important conflicts taking place in the world today. In the USA, the religious Right is shaping our political discourse and determining the outcome of not a few elections. The "charismatic renewal" (50 million Americans identify themselves as "born-again" Christians, including 1980's two major presidential candidates) and new religious movements have, over the past dozen years, captured much of the cultural initiative which has slipped away from the Left, though it is still true that religious-based opposition to US policy in Central America has been one of the few forces restraining the interventionist spirit of the current administration. Outside the USA, church-related groups in Western Europe have been active in a popular groundswell of support for nuclear disarmament. And elsewhere religion has moved into the center of the storms in the Middle East, Poland, and Latin America. In light of all this, can any serious social or political philosophy with claims to explaining or understanding the world ignore the enormous importance of religion today?

Nearly 200 years ago Hegel counted religion as one of the three manifestations of Absolute Spirit, but much of the Left since Feuerbach has assumed that art and philosophy are the only bona fide expressions of human aspirations. Is this judgment open to reconsideration? Has the simplistic and often misunderstood statement by Marx that "religion is the opium of the people" too quickly foreclosed a careful discussion on the Left of the continuing importance of religion in everyday life?

Rather than dismiss the issue of religion, we would like to raise it once again by recalling that the same Marx who appeared to deprecate the significance of religion also said that the starting point of all criticism is the criticism of religion. With this in mind, it seems that in the present situation one question in particular calls out to be addressed, namely: Can it be said that religion contains — either by nature or in certain of its contemporary forms — a potential for human emancipation? If it does, what should this mean for us in terms of future intellectual or "practical" work? If it does not, what attitude should we then take toward modern religious expression or contemporary religious movements?

Russell A. Berman: Religion suddenly appears to have taken on an important role in the politics of the eighties. Not that religion was untouched by the protest movements of the sixties: recall the role of clerics in supporting and opposing the war (Spellman vs. Berrigan), the role of the black church (and others) in the civil rights movement, the resistance to integration offered by white churches. Yet, then the religious elements seemed to represent only one component of loose and very broad coalitions, while now religion leads extra-party politics on both ends of the political spectrum: the moral majority and the peace movement. Perhaps the explanation of this predominance of religion is ultimately a matter of default, i.e., no other institution has the strength and organizational continuity to present an alternative to the politics of the established parties who are themselves no longer capable of generating credible programs.

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After the collapse of other autonomous structures — ethnic community organizations, unions, the public sphere in general — only the shell of the churches remains as a vehicle for anti-bureaucratic tendencies.

Although the notion of the church as the only free space and therefore the locus of emancipatory politics is probably most applicable to the particular situation of Eastern Europe, this structural analysis may solve part of the puzzle. However, it addresses the issue only from the outside, without considering the content of the phenomenon or the interpenetration of religious and political substance. Not only the place of political debate, but its very matter has taken on a religious coloration: the abortion issue, aid to parochial schools, the morality of nuclear arms. In 1960 John Kennedy's religion was an issue primarily as an ethnic, biographical fact; in the eighties, politics is rephrased in terms of dogma. While the situations in Poland and Iran are significantly different, the sudden importance of anti-Soviet Catholicism and anti-modernist Islamic fundamentalism make an analysis of the collision of religion and politics in the United States (or the industrialized West in general: the West German peace movement, Catholic traditionism in France) all the more urgent.

Weber's sociology of religion has been short-circuited: instead of religious dogma transformed as a secularized ethic and thereby mediating practical economic behavior, religious tenets enter politics immediately; politics meanwhile cannot resist the invasion. The bureaucratized parties, immobilized by interest groups, careerism and electoral finances, lose their legitimacy and their creativity; the working class movement from which the Democrats once drew their reform programs has dwindled. Now only the religious movements provide the value-oriented enthusiasm embedded in belief structures necessary for political debate to function (if only as a spectacle). Has religion saved politics from its apparent irrelevance during the post-Vietnam, post-Watergate age of cynicism? Perhaps, but in any case it has revitalized the political realm. In Weberian terms, the iron cage of meaningless politics is overcome by the community of charisma (so far, we have been spared bona fide charismatic leaders; or are Graham and Falwell forerunners of prophets yet to come? Project: religious leadership/media politics/culture industry). Yet, before investigating the character of this new politics, inspired by religion, one might well ask what will be the fate of the religious values which enter politics so directly. For Weber this is the question of the *Veralltäglichung* or *Versachlichung* of charisma. Political movements often emerge from religious backgrounds, e.g., the German peasant war (vide Bloch on Münzer), the English working class (Thompson on dissidence). A religious dimension provides ethical ideals and utopian goals which, removed from their specific religious context, form the basis for political engagement. Religion as the experience of the numinous, the radical other to the institutionalized status quo, can function as one source (there are others) for social-transformational creativity. Yet, religion is itself not necessarily eternally replenishable: the process of secularization may in fact dessicate the potential of religion to engender political utopias. One must differentiate between religion as a sacred fountain, a hidden source of creativity (with consequences in the political dimension despite an always problematic separation of the two) and, secondly, the immediate entry of a religious hierarchy into politics. In this latter case, the religious movement is by no means immune to the same trivialization and bureaucratization which cripple other political endeavors, e.g., the case of the old German Center Party. For religion to serve as a reservoir of utopian holiness, it may have to limit its own immediate politicization and leave the realization of its ideals to apostate followers. Conversely, the politicization of religious hierarchies may, despite spectacular short-term effects, such as the Bishop's statement on nuclear war, undermine

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the specifically religious character of the institutions and accelerate the process of secularization and demystification which tolerates no otherness, no utopias and no escapes.

If the politicization of religion has problematic consequences for religion, what of the effects of religion on politics? Again: historically, politics often has a religious source, as an institutional home or as a set of values. Yet, typically, politics breaks with the specific religious housing when it emerges as specifically political. *Pilgrim's Progress* may have established the belief-structure of generations of English radicals, but they did not participate in radical politics as strict Puritans. Radical politics emerges from the breaks with religion (identification and conflict). However, the eighties may be witnessing a different phenomenon: religion engenders politics, which cannot emancipate itself (identification and non-conflict, ergo: "predominance of religion."). Thus: the Moral Majority remains controlled by religious figures, just as the popular opposition to Reagan's foreign policy is largely led by clerics or lay figures with strong church ties. Whether one accepts the pessimistic evaluation of the politicization of religion offered above (i.e., as a part of secularization) or instead applauds the ethical engagement as the necessary outcome of religious dogma, one can question the social significance of a "clericalization of politics" for the participants in political debate. Without intending to idealize a once-upon-a-time world of the sixties, let me contrast what I have experienced as two very different modes of demonstration. In the old anti-war context, the demonstration certainly often relied on both charismatic elements (media stars) and emotional elements (rabble-rousing) but always within an overall context of a series of speakers — the determining feature was precisely that speakers were regularly included who attempted, often successfully, to provide rational analyses of the current political and military situations and their consequences for the strategy and tactics of protest. This demonstration form corresponded to the contentual claim to represent a rationally superior position in addition to a utopian cultural criticism. My admittedly limited impressions of contemporary demonstration modes suggest a very different sort of dynamic: the absence or, at least, the deemphasis of analytical discourse, the predominance of ceremonial elements: symbolic objects and actions, sermon-like addresses, collective responsive chants, moments of silence, clergy in frock. The participants no longer constitute the potentially self-determining rational body politic but rather a religious congregation, the charismatic community. This form, in turn, may correspond to the new contentual claim: the moral or even religious superiority of the movement, for which the evil of the fifties, godless communism, has been replaced by godless Republicans. Meanwhile the religious demonstration, despite its radical ethics, often suggests a curiously conservative accommodation with the status quo and the absence of an extended cultural criticism: applause for the police, no illegal tactics except the disciplined religious testimony of orderly civil disobedience (based of course on a fundamental acceptance of the lawfulness of the act of arrest, i.e., giving Caesar Caesar's). If these two modes of demonstration do reflect alternative ideal-types of political activity, then the character of the new religious politics, especially on the Left (for the Right: obviously) ought to be scrutinized. If the programs — anti-nuclear, anti-imperialist — are leftist, one must clearly ask about the forms as well. Are internal democratization and ceremonial hierarchy compatible? Or can the religious mobilization around purportedly leftist issues establish a political machine for religious mobilization around right-wing issues as well? Now the old anti-decolonization imagery of slaughtered missionaries in Africa has given way to the anti-imperialist imagery of the murdered nuns in Central

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America. Can the motion reverse itself? For example, could right-to-life without missiles and right-to-life for the unborn encompass the program of an approaching coalition? Political enlightenment suggests that practical goals be grounded in rational, democratic collectivity, not in the pronouncements of privileged speakers, whose statements are protected from criticism by religious aura.

Western societies achieved an effective separation of church and state, which, as a principle, one should be as reluctant to relinquish as the whole set of related civil liberties, no matter how ineffective they are in everyday life. Yet, that separation robbed religious institutions of universality, and religion became increasingly a merely subjective experience. Politics, no longer based on divine sanctions, might have been carried by a democratic ethos, but rational capitalism transformed it into bureaucratic administration. The new confrontation of religion and politics calls the traditional separation of church and state into question, but that cannot lead to a simple repetition of pre-modern institutional conflicts. The state is caught up in a profound legitimacy crisis, and religion can no longer rely on the reserves of traditionalist culture. Religion intends to teach morality to the state but risks undermining itself in a process of secularized politicization. The state may soon drape itself in a religious costume — God on our side — and gain popular appeal, but at the price of losing what is left of its democratic identity.

Casey Blake: The call for "lowered expectations" throughout the 1970s has had its desired effect of draining American politics of any hope of transcendence. A palpable despair, a grim sense of opportunities irretrievably lost, characterizes the public mood as political debate again devolves into public-image offensives and bureaucratic infighting. The dearth of enthusiasm and new ideas evident in 1980 among any presidential candidate left of, say, George Bush has now caught up with Reagan, who listlessly repeats his case for the coming economic boom. Reagan's Democratic challengers share this anxious, despirited air, as if they secretly believe with their constituents that all the promises of modernity have turned out to be mere swindles.

Religious revivalism both reflects and promises a way out of this situation. Falwell and other right-wing fundamentalists instruct their followers in the spiritual discipline necessary to survival in a meaner future. Steeled by their belief in the coming apocalypse, they find more tolerable the current economic crisis and the "dislocations" inevitable in the transition to "post-industrialism." Like neo-conservative Jews who have traded in the ethical-political communitarianism of early Zionism for the leaner, fiercer militarism of Begin and Sharon, Christian rightists have stripped Protestantism of any religious impediments to their political and economic program. Complementing the politics of limits, theirs is an inner regimen without grace, a religion without redemption.

Typical of the left's response to the religious right is Barbara Ehrenreich's "U.S. Patriots Without God on Their Side," an article published in *Mother Jones* soon after Reagan's inauguration. Arguing that "at its best," religion is "only a fleshless abstraction of our human concerns," Ehrenreich insists on "the need to divest ourselves of all invisible others, eternal spirits, after-lives and other comforting delusions...as we inch toward nuclear destruction." Though she acknowledges the role of religious activists in the civil rights and peace movements, Ehrenreich concludes that the New Right's marriage of authoritarianism and fundamentalism forces the Left to uphold the Enlightenment position of rational atheism. As it turns out, Ehrenreich reveals, Americans are fortunate to have in the Founding Fathers, Andrew Carnegie, Eugene

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Debs, Emma Goldman, Thomas Edison, and Lenny Bruce a homegrown tradition of unabashed atheists. The Left only needs to realize that such atheism is 20th-century Americanism, that, as Ehrenreich puts it, "the grounds for political morality, an activist morality, should not be religious in any sense."

Such rank religion-baiting on the Left probably fares well in Berkeley, Cambridge, and other upscale havens of secular consumerism. However, paeans to Andrew Carnegie and other atheist subversives have undoubtedly caused Ehrenreich and other socialists some embarrassment in their organizing work, for, as Melville noted, "many sensible things banished from high life find an asylum among the mob." While the Left has been busy dissecting the incipient fascist tendencies of the religious right, there has emerged a powerful strain of religious radicalism, often enlisting the support of Americans with little or no previous political experience. That religious radicalism has shown its force most fully in the anti-nuclear movement, where it upholds an ethical politics denied expression in mainstream political discourse.

Pacifists, anarchists, and unorthodox radicals moved primarily by religious considerations have proven to be the strongest link between past and present anti-militarist efforts, as well as the segment of the Left most wary of statist solutions and counter-cultural fads. Just as urban churches have been anchors of stability and community in neighborhoods ravaged by urban renewal, poverty, and crime, so too have religious organizations provided institutional continuity otherwise absent amidst the shifting allegiances and fleeting acronyms of the secular Left. Moreover, churches and synagogues have largely maintained their position as institutions devoted to ethical reflection — a practice notably lacking in most union locals or universities, the temples of preference for the old and new Left.

So far, the Left's response to the upsurge of religious radicalism, when not entirely hostile (as in Ehrenreich's case), betrays its lingering popular-frontism. Jewish and Christian radicals are welcomed, their signatures on petitions and their contributions to the daily grind of organizing gratefully accepted, so long as they check their faith at the door. Secular leftists willing to consider the finer points of man/boy love as emancipatory social practice tend to shrink from any consideration of how a religiously-based radicalism challenges their own "progressive" assumptions. The usual dialogue sanctioned on the Left between Christians and Marxists, for example, commonly takes two forms. Either it consists of negotiations toward a bureaucratic rapprochement of Church and Party (witness the tortured exchanges in the 1970s between the PCI and the Vatican), or it leads to sentimental endorsements of Jesus as a "good man" and of his early followers as "primitive communists," whose views (though necessarily deformed by the ideological suppositions of a primitive agrarian economy) prefigured the programs of "scientific" socialists and modern "progressives."

It is time for the Left to reconsider the critiques of Marxism made by Gustav Landauer, Simone Weil, Jacques Maritain, Waldo Frank, Lewis Mumford, Reinhold Niebuhr, and other ethical and religious radicals. Despite their differences, these theorists agreed that capitalist modernization had failed to fulfill the Enlightenment promise of a free society of rational individuals. Instead of emancipating men and women from absolute tyranny, industrialization bred what Weil called "the disease of uprootedness," with the reign of the paternalist state substituted for that of God the Father. Writing in the thirties and forties, Frank, Mumford, and Niebuhr elaborated a similar critique of industrial society, repudiating liberal pragmatism and Marxism as the heirs to positivism and the legitimating creeds of the factory system. The work of these three critics deserves special attention from American leftists concerned with the

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revival of religious radicalism, since it centered on a defense of the experience of transcendence as a prerequisite of critical thought. Thus Frank consistently warned against the Left's cult of mass mobilization and party-directed activism, arguing that social reconstruction "must be preceded by a compassionate detachment." "We cannot transfigure the world," he wrote, "while each of us is in the state of the world. We cannot create a group, while *we* are chaos. The transfiguring must first be in ourselves." Mumford agreed, calling for a "social conversion, deep-seated, organic, religious in nature" in order to "transcend the desiccated pragmatism that has served as a substitute religion."

This position cut against the grain of liberal-socialist thought about the irrelevance of religion to practical activity, while tempering any purely utopian radicalism by its insistence on the tragic nature of human life. Niebuhr argued that the assumptions of infinite technological and human progress that united Marxists and liberals fostered the "illusion" of establishing perfect justice on earth. As a Christian, Niebuhr denied the possibility of worldly perfection, but (at least until the mid-forties) he recognized that this illusion expressed man's capacity for self-transcendence, the core of any hope for a better world. "It is a very valuable illusion for the moment," he wrote, "for justice cannot be approximated if the hope of its perfect realization does not generate a sublime madness in the soul."

Generations of religious radicals have lived this difficult, paradoxical tension between their aspirations to transcendence and their necessary finitude. It is an experience they share with other believers, including right-wing fundamentalists, who have concluded that the ethical demands of such spiritual tension are more rewarding then the meager fruits of a life devoted to making a living, consumerism, and self-cultivation. The secular Left, which can hardly point with pride to a long history of moral behavior, could learn a great deal about a practical morality from its religous critics. Theoretically, the Left has yet to assimilate the religious critique of Marxism and liberalism, which has much to offer the ongoing re-examination of its enlightened, "progressive" inheritance. To state the issue clearly, leftists should go beyond inviting their religious critics to participate in their practical and theoretical debates. They should also consider the possiblity that their critics are right.

Laura Boella: I would like to concentrate on the relation between the rediscovery of religion and the crisis of the Left. Within the Left today we are witnessing a decline in disregard or even censure of specific theological issues. This is the result of a double crisis of the Left: the crisis of cultural-political hegemony — the idea of a continuity of Marxism and socialism with the modern bourgeois tradition — and the crisis of the idea of historical rationality understood as linear progress.

A recent interview of Berlinguer confirms this change, especially regarding traditional Italian Communist Party politics toward the Catholic world. The Catholic question is no longer identified with the question of Christian Democracy; he admits that the Catholic world is no longer monolithic. But what is most important is that even the dichotomy between the world of faith and the world of politics, which inspired the ideology of the *compromesso storico*, has been left behind. Between faith (which Catholics and Marxists had regarded as untouchable and unexaminable) and politics (the arena of confrontation), there is now recognized the enormous importance of a socio-cultural moment — a level where Catholics have been expert for centuries. This is a level of social welfare and of schooling, but also of life and "values," as Berlinguer put it

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in his interview. In the wake of the Italian Communist Party congress, what was indicated was not so much the choice of new interlocutors (progressive and dissident Catholic associations rather than the "good" sectors of the Christian Democrats) as rather the choice of an arena of confrontation between communists and christians which is no longer that of government alliances, but rather that of the family, schools, women, youth, the elderly, morality and values, and the quality of life.

Within Italian communist culture, even if it is still limited to a minority (Cacciari, Baget-Bozzo), reflection on religion has also assumed a distinctly philosophical character, focusing on the failure of a philosophy of history (the Enlightenment view of a "magnificant and progressive destiny") and of its rationalistic background.

It is not an accident that religious and theological themes have resurfaced in connection with the rediscovery of philosophers such as Bloch and Benjamin (a similar treatment can also be found in Simone Weil), with the challenge of Nietzsche and Heidegger, with the interest in the "mystical-irrationalist" turn in neo-positivism — especially in Wittgenstein. To limit ourselves to the first two previously mentioned philosophers, the critique of the idea of progress and of the authoriarian roots of a unitary course of history, no less than the critique of the self-evidence of the ego and the recovery of the emotive dimension anticipating consciousness are the results of the insertion of important theological elements on the trunk of a philosophy that has led to the depths of a crisis of foundations and the sense of the "death of God." As is well known, all this is an obvious result of the confrontation of both philosophers with Marxism.

This is the most decisive consequence of the rediscovery of religious themes by the Left: the distancing of the Marxist tradition from its Hegelian and historicist components, and the confrontation with a problem that goes to the roots of certain positions in Marx — the question of atheism. If historical transformations (or the evident result of their failure) must take account of moments of precariousness tied with finitude, the problem of religion can be dealt with critically in a way adequate to the modern philosophical consciousness, which has destroyed every substantialistic transcendent entity and, above all, sees itself as not a dispenser of certainties and reassurances typical of religious culture."

**Translated by Frank Adler*

Paul Breines: 1. The expectations of the anti-clerical and atheist wings of the Enlightenment and their heirs from Shelley through Bakunin, Marx, Bebel and Zola, to Freud and Russell, were wrong if you take their expectations to have been predictions, which in part they were. Religion, like nationalism, has not dissolved. But those expectations were also norms — atheism as a body of principles and values, and as such, not so clearly mistaken. True, in his last years Horkheimer argued that the classic theism-atheism relation had gotten reversed: in a world of repressive secularism and enlightenment, atheism was losing its once critical, emancipatory functions, while religion, once the ally of domination, was becoming the last hope of real transcendence and objective reason. I disagree. At its socially radical best, religion has and continues to have a great, stirring way of saying things (even in translation!) as in this from Germany in 1834: "And until the Lord calls you through his messengers and signs, be watchful, prepare yourselves in spirit, pray and teach your children to pray: 'Lord, break the rod of our oppressors and let Thy kingdom come, the kingdom of justice. Amen'." But this, from *L'Internationale* will do just fine, thank you: "Il n'est pas de

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sauveurs suprèmes:/Ni dieu, ni César, ni tribun;/Producteurs, sauvons-nous nous-mêmes!/Décretons le salut commun!" I am not more inclined to embrace religion because of its recent (sometimes excellent but most often terrible) renaissance, than I am to concede to caesarism or revolutionary vanguardism simply because they, too, have demonstrated impressive staying power.

2. Marx's critique of religion was also a critique of Enlightenment and young Hegelian atheism, even as Marx drew nourishment from both. A central point in his *Critique of Hegel's Philosophy of Right*, where Marx speaks of religion as both opiate and as spirit of spiritless conditions, is that the truth of atheism (its insight into God as humanity's projection of its own fears and hopes) hides a flaw (its failure to see that "Man" is *not* the core of things; rather, class-bound, estranged, fragmented, degraded men and women are). Yet, while Marx refused simply to accept an abstract faith in "Man," he did not opt for faithlessness, but for a faith of even more grandiose proportions: faith in History.

3. For some decades this faith served Marxism well, but never well enough. Already in the early 1920s, Ernst Bloch argued that the spiritual gaps in Marx's thought and in the "cold stream" of subsequent Marxism had issued in the need for a "theology of revolution"; and he would argue soon thereafter that the dogmatic materialism as well as the political disasters of Soviet Marxism had given a second wind to mass political religions of the right-wing and Nazi sorts. It appears that today the erosion (for us) of even vestigial faith in History has begun to awaken interest in religion (ritual, ceremony, eternal things, God) among once atheist-secular leftists. I find myself going in the opposite direction.

4. With many if not all participants in *Telos*, I came to both Marxism and to the journal with openness and often strong attachment to the element of secular religiosity in the Left and critical theory traditions. This can be taken as an expression in thought of a practical experience, in which not all *Telos* people shared but which helped define the times in which the journal grew: the religious streams that fed the New Left of the 1960s. I am thinking first and above all of the black churches, ministers and spirituals that nournished and guided the civil rights movement; also the role of the Second Vatican Council, which put a dent in Catholicism's continuum of reaction by officially sanctioning 'social Catholicism'; and the role of Catholic Workers and evangelical witness and sanctuary in the anti-war movements. In search of theoretical articulation of this experience within Marxism, we were drawn to Bloch, Benjamin, and the messianic elements in Marcuse, Adorno, Horkheimer. The main point for the moment is that the New Left of the 1960s was the first Western Left that was not anti-clerical. This was primarily because it did not need to be anti-clerical: changes had begun within the churches such that they were no longer at virtually every turn on the side of wealth, power, and oppression. But this meant the New Left was more likely to be influenced by the 'religious Left' and *vice versa*, a point worth remembering.

5. There remains abundant truth in Bertrand Russell's 1930 judgment: "The most important thing about Christianity, from a social and historical point of view, is not Christ but the church, and if we are to judge of Christianity as a social force we must not go to the gospels for our material. Christ taught that you should give your goods to the poor, that you should not fight, that you should not go to church, and that you should not punish adultery. Neither Catholics nor Protestants have shown any strong desire to follow His teaching in any of these respects. Some of the Franciscans, it is true, attempted to teach the doctrine of apostolic poverty, but the Pope condemned them, and their doctrine was declared heretical. Or, again, consider such a text as 'Judge not,

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that ye be not judged', and ask yourself what influence such a text has had upon the Inquisition and the Ku Klux Klan. What is true of Christianity is equally true of Buddhism..." But this is no longer the whole story. Once isolated examples of modern social Christianity (based on a return to the gospels) from Lamennais and Weitling to Marc Sagnier and Heinrich Böll have jelled into a growing and essentially humane social movement, which no atheist or secular leftist would have anticipated. Needless to add, resurgent religion includes in greater number a whole range of peddlers and followers of doctrines of fear, hatred, bigotry, mindlessness, sexual repression, misogeny, homophobia and the rest — the Khomeinis, Falwells, Gush Emunim, the Moonies, and all their myriad offspring.

6. As both sides of this renaissance proceed, I find myself spending more time looking at the history, ideas and struggles of atheism which, having taken it for granted and leaving it on the back burner, I know so little about. (Anyone interested in a fine place to begin or to continue could take up Carlo Ginzburg's recent *The Cheese and the Worms: The Cosmology of a Sixteenth Century Miller*). In the 1970s I thought it odd that we had, in view of Stalin's restoration by leftist groups, to occupy ourselves with a critique of him and his legacy. But wonders never cease. For the 1980s, as Barbara Ehrenreich has written, an even older problem has come back onto the agenda: Him and His restoration. Now there is a task.

Halina Charwat: In assessing the relation between religion and politics, and especially in addressing the issue of the emancipatory possibilities of religion, it might help to remember that there are two historical strands within the great monotheistic religions which can still be seen at work today. One may refer to them as the Jansenist and the Jesuit traditions, or the rationalist and the functionalist, or, simply, the theological and the pastoral. The first strand holds that man exists for God; it therefore has little concern for man's worldly comfort or welfare (Iran might be a contemporary example of this attitude). The other views God as existing for man's benefit, and consequently it shows greater care for man's concrete existence in this world. The liberation theologies exemplify this point of view today, but then so does Ronald Reagan, who pictures God as a Cold Warrior standing at his side in the apocalyptic struggle with "the focus of evil in the modern world" represented by the Soviet Union.

Clearly, the interconnection of religion and political power is a variable rather than an unqualified assertion about religion at all times and places. Whether religion acts as a radical or a conservative force depends on whether it is willing to condemn an existing social order in the light of absolute religious ideas of brotherly love and human dignity. With regard to Christianity, neither the Protestant churches nor, until recently, the Catholic Church have been much inclined to oppose the power of the state, except to defend their own interests. Accordingly, there is in our time ample evidence of working class alienation from organized religion, at least in Europe and Latin America where a distinct working class culture exists. Poland and Ireland are notable exceptions, since in these countries nationalism and religion have coalesced in opposition to enemies of a different faith. Since this alienation is in direct ratio to the appeal of Marxism, religion is led increasingly into the political arena in its efforts to once again become, not a mere branch of culture, but a central, determining force in human affairs.

Such an immanent posture, however, may well be self-defeating. Just as the great rationalist systems arose in the 17th and 18th centuries out of competition with religion for the ultimate truths about the nature of the world and the correct (i.e., ethi-

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cal) pattern of living, so now religion competes with reason in a process of pragmatization in which both end up "instrument-harnessed" to the social process. They are both becoming mere means to ends about which they no longer have anything fundamental to say. Horkheimer predicted this double evolution by which both reason and religion become compromised, leaving man "stripped of all aims except self-preservation." Religion, he said, cannot become secularized and remain religion (just as, one might add, Marxism cannot indulge in eschatology without betraying its materialistic vocation). If religion is to be understood as the expressive manifestation of what has been variously called man's "basic drive toward meaning" (Weber), or "unappeasable longing for justice" (Horkheimer), or "creative expectation" (Bloch), then its appropriate function is to be a *critical* rather than an ideological institution. Its unique capacity is to help man see the existent from the point of view of the *summum bonum*, the present from the point of view of a worthier future. The *summum bonum* encompasses both redemption, as it relates to the person, and emancipation, as it relates to the community and social practice. How to bridge the gap between the two, how to make the leap from essence to human existence, from the particular to the universal — those notions of reconciliation are today the crucial concern of philosophers and theologians alike. A careful reading of some of the works of John Paul II shows him, I believe, to be significantly engaged in that project.

If the crucial issues of our time are freedom and justice, then John Paul II can be seen as uniquely concerned with the former in his examination of man as *The Acting Person* (the title of a book he wrote while still Cardinal Wojtyla); and it is likewise clear that he has been wrestling with the latter issue ever since his accesion to the papacy. Man's essence, he emphasized in his early philosophical work, resides in his autonomy. The deliberate and hence distinctively human act is the ethical act. To be human is to be the "unrepeatable person" who is self-determining in moral judgment. This insistent emphasis upon *each, concrete* historical being as a unique person is well removed from the abstract "man" of Marxist theory and the abstract "humanity" of the French Revolution. It is man as actor, not instrument, under whatever economic system, consumerist or communsit. His vocation is work, as dominion over the earth, but the main significance of work is ethical: it is to make man better, more responsible in community with others. World order can only be "based on the truth about man and established upon a just distribution not only of wealth but also of power and responsibility."

The Church's message of liberation loses its originality when it allows itself to be put to ideological and political uses. The manipulation of Christianity by leftist politicians in Nicaragua, the attempt to use the new "popular" Church as a political tool to enhance the revolutionary fervor of the masses, is no better than the old alliances of church and state. In his recent visit to Central America, the Pope expressed his belief that the Third World is not going to be saved either by liberating theologies of the First World or by class ideology from the Second World, in as much as both focus on strategy and power rather than on the primacy and dignity of the person. It does, of course, sometimes happen that the aims of religion and political ideology coincide, as they do so far in Poland (where Solidarity has remained committed to individual freedom and non-violence), and as they undoubtedly did in Nicaragua in the earlier days of the revolution. As one of Milan Kundera's characters put it, it is stupid to think "that people who believe in God are incapable of nationalizing industries". It is indeed possible, as a Sandinista leader insisted, to be a believer and a revolutionary, but the status of the two, in relation to means, is not the same. Today, it can be said of the clerics

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who, against the direct orders of their superiors, hold senior posts in the Sandinista government, that their ideals have made them accomplices in a systematic betrayal of the popular revolution that toppled the Somoza dictatorship. In the face of the absolute religious truths of human dignity and brotherly love, there is no difference between right-wing authoritarianism and left-wing tyranny.

In El Salvador, John Paul denounced terrorism of both the Left and the Right; in Guatemala, he condemned official violence, torture and the repression of minorities; in Nicaragua, he warned that the church can and must promote social justice without becoming hostage to political imperatives. Nowhere did John Paul recommend that the church remove itself from national and political *concerns*. On the contrary, he was as hard on socially aloof conservative bishops as he was on liberation priests, exhorting all to "busy ourselves, not only with the things of the spirit but also with the realities of this world and the human society of which we are a part". He urged them to "preach with courage all the social implications of the Christian situation", but as pastors, *not* as technicians and politicians. The Church, he proclaimed, must act as public conscience, or there will be none. Its crucial, urgently needed role is to provide the absolute values by which human action is to be measured and the human person protected against the exigencies of day to day action, the calculations of rationality and the vagaries of power.

From John Paul's native land, an actor in the ongoing Polish drama writes: "Well, I dare to state that we as a nation should free our Church from secular obligations and take these upon our own shoulders...The Church is as necessary to us as bread and water, but not in the material sense, [but rather] for our moral existence". I find such an allocation of responsibilities acceptable and I am willing at least to entertain the notion that, in this time of tyranny of the unavoidable, religion may constitute a privileged sphere in which is anchored and preserved the idea of human freedom without which social justice turns to ashes.

John A. Coleman, S.J.: In numerous passages in his works, Alexis de Tocqueville argues, almost plaintively, that the embattled divisions between the friends of religion and the partisans of human emancipation in the first half of the 19th century in France were historically adventitious. Christianity in France had become, through an historical accident, intertwined with reactionary politics. At root, however, Tocqueville claims, in its germinal ideal and projected horizon Christianity proclaims a gospel of both radical equality and liberty. Again, Tocqueville assumes that religion is eternal. It answers insistent and authentic human needs for transcendence, wholeness, meaning, belonging, a ground for hope and trust in humanity and for history.

As a Catholic committed to both religion and emancipation, I have much sympathy for these two proposals. Yet, Tocqueville made a too easy argument. Religion as idea, event and institution is historically and intrinsically ambiguous. Christian symbols include world-sustaining possibilities which support the social *status quo*. But as Max Weber and other sociologists of religion have shown, they also contain world-creating and world-destroying potentialities opposed to the social *status quo*. Moreover, the world-creating and world-destroying possibilities latent in the Christian symbols can be found in creative *or* demonic forms (remember Jonestown!). Because it appeals to a supra-empirical transcendent reference, religion can be very dangerous indeed.

Nevertheless, I believe that human emancipation is at the heart of every authentic religion. Certainly for Christianity, liberation — meaning the freeing of human beings

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from bondage to compulsion, servitude, or other forms of political or social oppression — is at the root of its doctrine of salvation. Moreover, God is *for* humanity. He accompanies it in its struggles to overcome oppression. He takes sides in a special way with the poor, the outcasts, the marginalized ones.

Though this interpretation has an undeniable basis in the central texts of Christian thought, it has not always received satisfactory articulation through the ages. Recently, however, there have been important shifts in theology (and, in the case I know best, in the Roman Catholic Church as an institution) which increasingly link Christianity to the project of human emancipation in both its social and spiritual dimensions. Most modern theologians are "critical" theologians. They read the Bible and the tradition through the lens of those whom Paul Ricoeur has called "the masters of suspicion" about religion: Marx, Freud, and Nietzsche. They have engaged in a sustained conversation with the Enlightenment. In doing so they have begun to subject theological symbols, popular religion, and religious praxis to an ideology critique in order to retrieve the authentic emancipatory tradition of Christianity.

The Grand Inquisitor fails over and over again because in Johannes B. Metz's phrase, this authentic tradition keeps alive "the dangerous memory of Jesus." Jesus, the radically free man, contests the secular and religious powers and principalities of his time. He breaks social customs which exclude women, non-Jews, or outcasts from his religious tradition. Recent theology stresses anew this dangerous memory of Jesus. It also regains the biblical notion of the revelatory character of the poor in history. Again, it seeks solidarity in suffering with the victims of social domination.

These themes abound in the dominant liberation theologies in the Third World and, increasingly, in First World theologies as well. They are included in papal social teaching, which propagates a form of moral — but not utopian — socialism. Catholic social teaching stresses workers' organization, the priority of labor over capital, worker co-determination in industry, the necessity of class conflict where class divisions are based on injustice. In his recent encyclical on work, John Paul II could call for solidarity *of* the poor and *with* the poor. Behind its seminal notion of the dignity of the human person, Catholic social teaching insists that by enshrined human rights and in humane institutions every person is called to become a subject of his or her own history, society and work life.

There has been a massive shift in world Catholicism to the Third World. By the year 2,000, 70% of the world's Catholics will live in the Third World. It is in the church's self-interest to champion a new world economic order which squarely faces a re-alignment of trade, aid and transfer of technology between Northern and Southern nations.

I have no doubts that institutional imperatives and its own drift toward false security will lead the church now and in the future, time and again, to betray Jesus' revolution. It will become again, in places and on issues, a Grand Inquisitor afraid of that freedom which Jesus offers and calls us to. Riddled with cultural and structural contradictions, the institutional church will distort as well as convey the dangerous memory of Jesus and his call to Christians to follow his radical emancipatory freedom.

I would claim that there is a strong party in Roman Catholicism who are friends of emancipation, indeed see human emancipation as central to the message of Jesus, who reveals that God is for humanity. This party may contend with others about what constitutes authentic human emancipation. Meanwhile, with them and with the institutional church on many issues, a tactical alliance with the secular friends of human emancipation is possible. Surely no Catholic any longer believes that a Christian movement for justice could by itself become the historical force that transforms society. What will be necessary is cooperation, solidarity, joint struggle.

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Since their motivation in struggling for human emancipation is primarily religious, Christians of the Left will not be comfortable with parties or social movements which will not allow the same critique of their ideas and praxis which critical theologians apply to the church. As Daniel Berrigan once trenchantly put it when he was asked what he would do if he were in Saigon the day it fell and the South Viet Nam regime was swept away, "I would stand on the dias with the victors and ask 'Let me go inspect your prisons!' "

Harvey Cox: During the past two years I have been investigating the re-emergence of traditional religion as a potent factor in the political and cultural history of what appears to be a dawning "post-modern" world. I have focused mainly on the widespread appearance of the so-called "Christian base communities" in Latin America and the theological expression they have given rise to: liberation theology. On the other side, I have investigated the political renaissance of fundamentalism in the U.S. and especially its eager embrace of high technology vehicles to make its message known. To my great surprise, I found some unexpected structural similarities between these two movements. Both the base communities/liberation theology movement, on the one hand, and the fundamentalism/television/direct mail phenomenon, on the other, are producing new alliances that shatter social formations in existence since the Reformation and Counter-Revormation. And, with Menachem Begin embracing Jerry Falwell or Latin American Catholics cooperating with Marxists it is obvious that these movements bring together people who only a few years ago would have thought of themselves as being on different sides.

Another structural similarity between these two disparate movements is that both utilize leadership which is not legitimated either by existing ecclesiastic authority or by conventional educational institutions. The leaders of the base communities in Latin America tend to be either lay people or lower rank clergy (including nuns) who display the particular abilities needed in such movements but often do not have the legitimacy of ordination or even of formal theological training. Similarily, among American fundamentalists, the leadership tends to fall to those who have a particularly well-developed gift for persuasion, for public speaking, and especially for the management of large organizations.

In my own view as a theologian, both of these movements signal a massive change in contemporary Christianity. Today Christianity seems to be leaving behind what might be called the liberal consensus and is moving toward a "post-modern" reconstruction of both its religious institutions and its theological rationale. I believe that the base communities will make a substantial contribution to this movement, but it appears to me that the North American fundamentalists will not, because they have become so deeply wedded to the implicit "modern" values in the mass media and in the organization of their own enterprises that it has become impossible for them to maintain any kind of useful, independent criticism.

What seems to be occuring in the base communities, however, is what one writer has called "a reappropriation by the oppressed of their right to transcendence." Most poor people in these communities are not interested in abolishing religion; they are interested in regaining the control of their own capacity for symbolic production and for religious innovation and pratice. This control is expropriated from them by powerful elites who try to extend their hegemony by achieving a monopoly on the power to produce and distribute symbols of meaning and value. The revolutionary process by which oppressed peoples regain their capacity for *material* production must be

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understood as only one dimension of the revolutionary process. The other is the parallel one by which oppressed peoples regain their own rights to the creation and recreation of religious symbols and practices.

Speaking as a Protestant theologian, it has become clear to me in recent years that the early history of critical Protestant theology made it difficult in the subsequent history of that discipline for theologians to be aware of the influence of their own social class position in their formulation of theology. Since the beginning of the 19th century, Protestant theology has been the product of white, middle-class male thinkers largely ensconced in academic institutions and without much contact with the vast majority of believers and unbelievers, who were the hypothetical objects of their teaching. Actually, the interlocutor of theology has tended to be other educated persons, especially those for whom the problem of religious doubt and anxiety was a central one. One of the most refreshing elements about liberation theology is epitomized in the declaration by Gustavo Guiterrez that liberation theology is not so much concerned with non-believers as it is about "non-persons," that is, those who are deemed by the existing culture structure as being of less or of no importance. The "audience" for Protestant theology since the early 19th century has largely been what Schleiermacher called "the cultured despisers of religion." What we see happening now is a shift *away* from this conversation about religion and its meaning within the bourgeois class, and towards a conversation between those who are helping to thematize and formulate theological expressions and the poorest and most depressed groups in society. As Otto Maduro, the author of *Religion and Social Conflicts*, has pointed out, what is going on in Latin America is not only a revolution led in some measure by religious peoples, it is also a "revolution *in* religion." The change is not only in the relation between the Catholic church and the subaltern classes, it is also a change in the process by which Catholic theology, liturgy, and ethics are created, transmitted, and further developed. Perhaps it is Ernesto Cardenal who best exemplifies this newly emerging method. In his volumes entitled *The Gospel at Solentiname*, he demonstrates how, when poor campesinos are exposed to the stories of the New Testament, they can comment on them in ways which illuminate these texts and evoke from them nuances and meanings which trained middle-class theologians might never see. The "hermeneutical problem" itself may be part of a class phenomenon.

What 19th-century critics of religion probably failed to see was that religion is not only a *product* of a social process; it must also be seen as an *agent*. Religious values and practices are not only the epiphenomenal results of changes in other parts of a social formation. They also color, shape, influence, and effect other sectors, something of which not only Weber but Marx also was well aware — even if Lenin was not. All of this raises intriguing ontological questions which must eventually be addressed despite the practice of phenomenological bracketing and of other devices used by modern social science to avoid these basic considerations. Dealing with religion will inevitably push social science even further away from its positivist tradition and may in fact restore a conversation which has lapsed since the beginning of modern social scientific inquiry.

It seems significant to me that the liberation theology movement, perhaps the most significant theological development of the 20th century, is one which emerged from the periphery of the modern world, not from its center. It emerged from a continent viewed by many as a kind of backwater of superstition and ignorance, a place which was not taken seriously as a source of theological renewal or vigorous religious scholarship. Liberation theology has emerged out of a new kind of socially structured

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relation between theologians and poor, oppressed people. It is a theology which has escaped from the confines of the academy and has moved into the streets, the *barios*, the ghettos, and the *falvellas*. It is not a theology produced by intellectuals and distributed to the waiting masses. Rather, it is a form of religious awareness, self-criticism and resymbolization which has emerged from a struggle in which both theologians and ordinary lay people have been involved with each other. This in itself may be the most important clue as to how any new breakthrough in related fields must eventually occur.

Charles Davis: Whether religion contains a potential for emancipation depends upon the relation between emancipation and salvation. Salvation concerns existential anxiety, which means suffering, death and guilt, experienced as manifesting human finitude and failure. Religion is a complex of symbols, doctrines, rites and institutions, offering the assuagement of existential anxiety. While religion goes back to the earliest times, emancipation as an explicit ideal emerged at a later, modern stage in the development of social consciousness. Emancipation as a human ideal and project is a response to the awareness that today much human potentiality remains unfulfilled. Fulfillment is blocked by the constraints of class society and by other forms of domination, preventing people from exercising their freedom as adult, self-conscious subjects. Oppression has been internalized, so that emancipation includes, besides revolutionary action, a process of self-reflection through which the subject becomes free from unrecognized dependencies.

Emancipation as an ideal and project does not replace religion. Even in an emancipated, classless society, existential anxiety would remain. Nor does it help to claim that we must live without consolation in the face of our finitude. No question of existential consolation or lack of consolation, no religious interpretation of our existential situation, would arise, were not the human spirit an open dynamism towards a transcendent realm. Refuse to acknowledge the insistent reality of that dynamic thrust of human consciousness out of and beyond the ordinary fragile human self, out of and beyond the limited world in which we live, to what is unlimited and unapprehensible, and you place an arbitrary repression at the heart of consciousness and thus distort the process of self-reflection essential to emancipation. The project of emancipation itself would then become a vehicle of repressed religion. It would be led to promise more than it can deliver. Ultimately it would perhaps even render politics demonic by absolutizing it.

Religion cannot replace emancipation without distorting itself. Emancipation, though a limited ideal, has its own place and validity. Man may not live by bread alone, but religion is not a substitute for bread. Likewise, religion is no substitute for social and political liberation. The attempt to make it so is a misunderstanding of religion by the oppressed and a misuse of religion by the oppressors. But some genuinely religious people have no critical awareness and are under an unrecognized domination. The two ideals, salvation and emancipation, are distinct. Nevertheless, there is a mutual interface between them.

Some religion removes the motivation for the pursuit of emancipation. It does so, for example, by first regarding this world as unalterably a place of injustice, corruption, suffering and misery and then by offering its consolation through hope of another world to come. The religious Right tends to that pessimistic conception. Again, some religion reinforces oppressive structures by canonizing the existing social order

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as part of an unchanging cosmic order in its attempt to give meaning to the human existential situation. This represents a failure to differentiate the various levels of human existence, and such religion should be dissolved as archaic by critical thought.

All religion has in one respect a potential for strengthening the pursuit of emancipation. It appeals to the most intimate being of the subject, opening the subject to a reality that transcends history and the temporal order. While seeming to render emancipation nugatory, that appeal, instead, liberates the human person into a subjective freedom beyond the conventions of any particular social order. It thus tends to create the self-reflective, critical subject, free from the dominative power of the established collectivity. The emancipatory force inherent in religious transcendence, however, can be nullified by a conceptualization that canonizes the existing order as sacred.

Some religion includes a demand for emancipatory activity because of the particular conception of transcendent reality. The religion of the biblical prophets is an example. The prophets constantly denounce social injustice and the oppression of the poor and powerless on the ground that the covenant relation of the people of Israel with a God of righteousness, of steadfast love, of faithfulness and reconciliation should be reflected in relations among the people themselves and in their treatment of the stranger. God's preference for the poor and oppressed is also a symbolic expression of His transcendence, namely, of the refusal to identify Him with any worldly power.

Traditional Christianity contains conflicting elements. Hence, the debate among contemporary Christians concerning the relation of their religion to movements of political liberation. On the one hand, the Christian message continues the themes of prophetic religion, particularly in seeing love of others as an essential reproduction of the love of God for us. The love of our neighbors, if consistently lived out, leads to an effort to change what is wrong in their social position and environment. On the other hand, the object of Christian hope, the Kingdom, is not of this world, and the way to new life is through suffering and death, following the example of the crucified Christ. This calls into question both the worthwhileness and feasibility of political emancipation as an ideal. Through the centuries the belief of Christians that theirs was the unique and definitive religion also led to a stress upon permanence and authority which created an undiscriminating resistance to all social change. But contemporary Christian thinking seems to be overcoming this particular prejudice.

David Gross: If "human emancipation" means liberation from social, political, and economic oppression, then surely this is something relatively new in the history of mankind. There do not seem to be any traces of this sort of emancipatory outlook in the earliest religions. Most religions, in fact, were founded *before* anyone even imagined that social justice, equality, or freedom from bondage were possible here on earth. In their origins, the oldest religions were therefore not anti-emancipatory, they were simply pre-emancipatory. They did not vie with concerted efforts to improve life here below because at that time there were no such efforts underway. As responses to the incontrovertible *fact* of incompleteness and suffering in life, these religions made sense on their own terms. If they spoke of perfection, justice, repose, or harmony, they never hinted that these would be achievable in this world. *That* notion was inconceivable. Instead, these qualities were projected into an afterlife where their realization was more believable.

Much later, though, when emancipation began to seem imaginable as a human pro-

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ject, most religions took on the character of being anti-emancipatory to the extent that they diverted people from this-worldly ends. Once there were feasible solutions to the human condition besides the religious one, religion wittingly or unwittingly developed the potential of becoming obfuscating. It was able for the first time to divert people's attention away from real, practical alternatives to misery or tyranny. It was even capable of becoming something overtly ideological, defending an oppressive status quo against all efforts to change it for the better. What decisively altered the social meaning and function of religions, then, was the emergence in time of a real capacity — however vaguely perceived at first — to transform life on earth, to liberate people from ancient constraints once considered natural or eternal. This capacity appears to have developed for reasons having nothing to do with religion, but eventually it forced all religions to make a choice which did not have to be made before. Should they support emancipatory projects focused on improvements in this life or should they oppose them? Should they consider these projects threats to religious interests or were they somehow tied up with religious concerns?

Virtually all the important religious thinkers in history were compelled to take sides on this issue, and of course they were not the only ones. In society at large others took sides as well. Those individuals with a vested interest in stability or in traditional power relations naturally lined up against emancipation in order to protect their privileges and positions. So did most of what might be called the "religious establishment," no matter what religion one is referring to, since worldly, liberatory concerns were viewed as hostile to divine or other-worldly matters. Even when religious authorities did not directly lend their support to the powers that be, it was possible for religious doctrines and dogmas — particularly those formulated in a pre-emancipatory period — to be used against any and every form of emancipatory interest labelled dangerous by the secular authorities. It is in this way that religion seems to have become an ideological force, regardless of the intentions of religious leaders. Religion was simply utilized for what were seen as its practical effects, such as keeping people docile, passive, and submissive. (A good example of this is the statement attributed to Necker, the French minister of finance just before the Revolution, who is supposed to have said that when taxes are increased so must the quantity of religious instruction.) But of course this kind of instrumentalization of religion behind the backs of religious spokesmen was most often not necessary. Overwhelmingly, those who claimed to speak for religion sided with existing power structures and declared themselves against emancipatory movements, however variously these movements may have been defined.

But, historically speaking, religious individuals have had, and still have, another choice. They can refuse to sanction an anti-emancipatory use of religion. They can take the position that human liberation is not, at bottom, incompatible with a religious viewpoint. They can go even further and argue tht human and spiritual emancipation are merely two connected facets of one continuous project. Admittedly, this choice has been relatively rare. In its clearest forms it may not be much more than two or three centuries old. The reason that so few have chosen to pursue this line of thought undoubtedly has to do with the numerous institutional and doctrinal contraints which have become embedded in all the major religions. Throughout the centuries it has been hard to be *inside* a religion, to use the language and concepts of religion, and yet speak for this-worldly liberatory goals. The problem lies not only with the fact that many religions, as "establishment" institutions in their own right, gradually aligned themselves with the givens of social and political power, thereby inculcating not emancipatory attitudes but rather the qualities of obedience and conformity toward *all*

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authority (particularly the authority of church and state). The problem also lies with the fact that most religious doctrines, though formulated in settings that preceded any thought of earthly emancipation, eventually came to be used in anti-emancipatory ways. The Hindu notion of *karma*, for example, promises incarnation into a higher state if one dutifully fulfills one's worldly obligations — a doctrine which can easily be turned into a defense of quietism or resignation to the world as it is. Buddhism likewise stresses not social emancipation but renunciation or a merely contemplative attitude before the facts of life; suffering and injustice are thought to be ineradicable, but it is assumed that they can nonetheless be transcended on a purely spiritual level through the achievement of nirvana. Orthodox Islam also emphasizes strict civic obedience and submission to the ruler, not rebellion against worldly power on the basis of putative claims to "freedom" or "liberation." And of course the Christian notion of salvation, as it has usually been interpreted, has meant the saving of one's soul, the attainment of heaven, and therefore the discounting of or indifference toward the world as it actually is. No wonder the major organized religions have so often proven to be barriers to human emancipation.

Nevertheless, having said all this I would still want to assert that real emancipatory impulses can be found in religion *if* one searches for them within the dissident strains of established religions, and *if* one rethinks certain traditional religious attitudes which have too often remained unexamined. I believe both of these things are now occurring within some branches of contemporary Christianity, particularly Catholicism. Briefly, I want to suggest some qualities which I think would have to be present, and increasigly *are* becoming present now, if religion is to be supportive of, if not directly bound up with, the interests of human emancipation.

First, religion would have to redefine the meaning of "sin" by de-privatizing it. Sin would have to be considered something more than a category referring merely to individual transgression. Rather, it would have to be seen as a category which can be transferred to the world at large, allowing one to brand states, corporations, or even entire social systems as "sinful." What has to be made clearer is that sin may be structural as well as personal. Institutional violence and institutional injustice, for example, might legitimately be labelled "sins," and so, too, political oppression by the state (as well as political apathy on the part of a population).

Second, religion would have to redefine the meaning of virtue. Humility for instance, need not necessarily be considered a virtue if it remains only a private quality which never embraces the "fellowship of the humiliated." Love and care may not in all cases be virtues either if they do not extend, say, beyond the confines of one's family: if they never become genuinely fraternal, interpersonal, and deeply inter-subjective qualities. The old, familiar "virtues" — such as meekness, self-effacement, passivity, or the willing acceptance of deprivation for the "beauty of soul" it allegedly confers — perhaps also deserve to be thoroughly reconsidered. Under the right conditions, protest, criticism, personal witness, contestation, and other forms of self-assertion might certainly be thought of as equal or greater instances of virtuous behavior.

Third, religion would have to redefine the meaning of authority. Authority would need to be viewed not as a quality which magically emanates from status or rank, and which under all circumstances has to be obeyed, but rather as something emanating from *practices* and validated only by practices. Very simply, it might be better to think of authority as emerging from acts, not from pre-ordained structures, orders or hierarchies. No individual in authority should be obeyed simply because of his position, even if he is a bishop, a pope, or a president. He should be obeyed solely on the

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basis of the nature of his commands and on the degree to which his own actions are consonant with his commands. This conception — very new, but already evident in Latin American Catholicism — hints at a radically anti-authoritarian model of authority, where every ecclesiastical or political leader would have to earn respect not only on the grounds of what he stands for, but on the grounds of what he actually does, and on how serious he is about integrating his convictions into his life.

Fourth and last, religion would have to redefine the meaning of two key terms which have always been at the heart of the religious experience: truth and hope. Truths would need to be regarded as something more than dicta passed down or conferred on people by a divinity. Instead, they might better be viewed as things acquired *or actually produced* by praxis. It is important, in other words, to see truths as generated, not inherited. Similarly, truths should be treated as qualities that have to be manifested and lived if they are to avoid being little more than abstract formulae. (Perhaps this is one way to think of the Incarnation; if the Word had not been made Flesh, if the "truth" had not literally achieved embodiment and been reproduced again in another form, the Word would have remained a meaningless abstraction, and not really have been "true" at all.) The concept of hope would also benefit by being rethought along the same lines. The term does not have to refer to a passive form of waiting or longing for the Kingdom. It can better be seen as a kind of expectation that requires action to realize what is hoped for, since only an active, militant hope can bring the future into being. This is an awareness achieved by numerous messianic and millenarian movements through the centuries. It undoubtedly gave these movements much of their drive and energy, even if they often squandered or misused it.

Most of the redefinitions I have just mentioned obviously place central importance on praxis. It seems to me that when a religion becomes practice-oriented in the ways I have suggested, it tends to promote human emancipation whether this is directly intended or not.

As Johann B. Metz has put it, a religion such as Christianity, which has traditionally emphasized redemption, still has the capacity to stress various forms of this-worldly emancipation as well. Whereas the focus of redemption has generally been on personal deliverance, the focus of emancipation could be placed on world deliverance. Even the term "salvation" does not have to be understood as private, individual transcendence. It can be seen as the salvation of the whole, the redemption of all the people of the Covenent. (It is worth noting, too, that the phrase "resurrection of the flesh" indicates, biblically, not the resurrection of the body alone but the resurrection of mankind in general, of a community of people.) I suspect that a reconsideration of terms and concepts such as these can have the effect of opening religion to the world in a far more liberating way than has been the case in the past. Then people may discover, as I intimated above, that spiritual and human emancipation might be interdependent aspects of what is really one and the same project.

John Hellman: For some months now I have been living near St. Honorat Island which is just off the Mediterranean coast of France, not far from Cannes. On the island there is an ancient monastery called Notre Dame de Lerins. Its origins date back to the Middle Ages and it is still occupied today by Cistercian monks. Seeing the monastary everyday and occasionally observing the lives of the monks in the fields in prayer, I am struck by how difficult it would have been for me to argue, ten or fifteen years ago, that the religion practiced by this Cistercian community held any potential for human

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emancipation. At that time, the monastic life seemed to me little more than an anachronistic survival from the medieval past: unhealthy, stultifying, self-indulgent. Many French Catholics agreed, and some even organized demonstrations to prevent the construction of new contemplative monastaries because of the waste of funds and energies they implied. But now I've changed my mind. It appears to me that the strict contemplative religious orders are that section of the Catholic Church which has profited most from the reforms of the Second Vatican Council. A rethinking of the role and traditions of monasteries has helped spark a "monastic renewal," and it does not require religious belief to recognize that these communities are healthy, balanced, harmonious, and quite lucid about why they have freely come, and remain, together.

Today, the monastery of Notre Dame de Lerins is living through one of the most astonishing periods of growth in its long history. This growth is due not only to the integrated, uncomplicated attractiveness of the community life to be found there, but also to an increasing disenchantment among the young with the self-centered civilization represented by the yachts of the Western European elite in the bay just one hundred yards from the abbey. The (often very young) religious men and women living on St. Honorat, bound together by common ideals and aspirations, exhibit qualities of gentleness, generosity, and mutual affection which would be difficult to equal. For some, the attraction of this "new monasticism" lies in its success in creating a viable, long-term, luminous, totally voluntary, form of communism. This mode of communism is founded on selfless affection which is not marred by hatred of classes, peoples, or ideologies. It is a communism which is open to and concerned with the sufferings of the outside world while at the same time clarifying its commitment to silence, simplicity, and brotherly love. If a growing concern for social justice and the plight of the poor and oppressed is a sign of an evolution toward the Left, then contemporary monasticism should be seen as evolving leftward.

Marx and Engels never encountered the kind of communism now embodied in the new monastic communities — save perhaps in the writings of Thomas More. As a result, they never seemed capable of imagining a sense of God as promoting anything other than egotism, self-delusion, exploitation, fanaticism and violence. Neither their critiques of religion, nor those of Lenin and Freud, seem to apply directly to the style of religiousness practiced by the revivified contemplative communities in Europe and North America today. Moreover, certain of these modern expressions of religion seem to have astounding capabilities for aiding their members, and others, to liberate themselves from alienating and destructive forces in our culture. Consequently, contemporary monasticism seems to possess the qualities which Simone Weil singled out as characterizing those manifestations of religiosity which she thought displayed an authentic sense of God's presence: beautiful religious ceremonies, a sense of the beauty of the world, and the encouragement of love of one's neighbor.

I would argue that many contemporary forms of religion foster qualities exactly opposite these: namely, fanaticism, prejudice, selfishness, and hatred. It would be best if we discuss modern religious movements in terms of these three criteria. We would then be closer to discovering which ones are potentially emancipatory and which are not. Of course, not everyone can perceive emancipatory possibilities in religious communities which live in silence and celibacy, and which try to share their basic values with others. But for those who do not find *a priori* this inversion of the prevalent vaues of our society absurd, contact with contemporary contemplatives can be very positive. The new monasticism demonstrates that an authentic sensitivity to the presence of

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God can be beautiful, and in turn, promote an appreciation of the world's beauty, as well as attentive, fraternal affection and concern.

Joel Kovel: The critique of religion begins with its purely sociological character. Marx, and later Freud (the two being suitably linked here as avatars of the Enlightenment), saw how the church crushed human possibilities. They concluded, each in their way, that religious institutions served oppression, whether by deferring the search for happiness onto an afterlife, or fostering infantile dependence on the father. In other words, the church was an instrument of mystification. However, Marx and Freud both confused the institution of religion with religion, and assumed that the appeal of the latter was accounted for on the basis of the mystifications provided by the former. What neither considered seriously was the nature of the thing mystified. Taking for granted, respectively, that human aspirations were confined to earthly or libidinal gratification, they therefore neglected the possibility of authentic religious experience, or, by implication, any historical consequences of it.

One does not make this critique abstractly. If it is true that Marx and Freud missed the point about religion, then it is not they so much as the Enlightenment which stands in the dock. Nor can the political intellectual remain unaffected. If we are to admit the validity of authentic religious experience, we are equally obliged to re-examine the presuppositions of our own discourse, shaped as this has been by an attitude antithetical to religion. The critique in question is an autocritique as well; and it rests upon an inquiry into whether there is "need" for religion once its mystifications have been stripped away.

Marx would doubtless have argued that such a question could only be settled when a classless society arose to signal the end of prehistory and the beginning of real history — i.e., with the emergence of the real individual. Only under emancipated conditions, he would claim, can needs become truly and genuinely human.

But if this is so, and I believe it is, then it in no way disposes of the question of religion; it only insists that religion be integral to the struggle for justice. It means that those who value religion had better fight for a worthwhile world to have it in, and not try to use it as an escape from this, unfree world. The question of a religious need still stands; all that has been deferred is its universal realization.

To address this question, we need only imagine the consequences of emancipation on a people, or since this is too abstract and utopian, on the fortunate individual who has achieved some mastery of social existence. To deny the possibility of an authentic religious need is the same as asserting that such a person would enter a stage of rest or quiescence once the struggle for a better life had been won. No questions of an ultimate or transcendent nature would presumably ever mar such a consciousness, for whom life would take on the character now advertised for retirement communities in Florida.

Such an image is both absurd and obnoxious. If emancipation is to have any content worth struggling for, it must provide for the complete unfettering of all human capacities. Specifically, it would release the mind from the constraints of any vulgar materialism. Indeed, since it is just such a materialism which sustains bondage, then the revolutionary struggle will directly foster openings for the spirit. In sum, how can self-determination, once it breaks the human-forged chains, stop at the borders between the self and the unknown, or even unknowable? How can the motion toward universality that is at the core of all striving for emancipation not extend to the universe itself?

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It is self-evident, then, that the kind of striving that has been drawn into religions is not only inherent in human nature, but expresses the fullest development of humanity. This urge, or need — which is not yet religion, but only the presupposition for religion — may be described as the pursuit of an ultimate or sacred relation to the universe. Far from being a residual category, we may claim that one of the paramount goals for a just society should be the creation of conditions where the sacred can be universally realized

Why should the question of a sacred relation to the universal be a religious one and not a matter for science or philosophy? Are not the secular doctrines equivalently concerned with this? They are — yet it does not appear possible for science or philosophy to meet the need for ultimates until they abandon their historically determined character, which is to say, until they cease being technocratic. This, too, is a revolutionary project, and the science that emerges on the other side will not be what is ordinarily practiced today. Even though theoretical physics has, in its most advanced form (at times in a synergism with Buddhism or Hinduism) broken through the boundaries of the Enlightenment and dissolved the membrane between consciousness and matter, science as a practical project remains near-totally integrated into the technocratic state. As now practiced, science — and philosophy, too, insofar as it remains tied to a syntactic and shared discourse — is the province of *ratio*. It entails the measurement and comparison of things according to an objective scale. To achieve scientific status, a datum has to be consensually agreed upon using the least common denominators of perception and language — and this is readily assimilated into technocracy. However, an "ultimate relationship of the self to the universe" necessarily contains what is ineffable and incomparable. At its core is the concrete experience of the divine. This sacred core is elaborated in as many ways as there are religions, yet remains irreducible: a moment of naked terror between self and the non-self, the primary otherness of the universe. The experience "passeth all understanding." It cannot be contained in common speech and cannot be demonstrated by another (although it can be intuitively shared, in ways that constitute the practical bases of organized religions).

However it may be organized and developed, the sacred core of religious experience is, quite contrary to Marx's or Freud's reductive critique, neither anodyne nor consolation. Indeed it stands for nothing else, being beyond the perimeter of the symbol. True, the individual who persists in confrontation with the divine eventually comes through onto a plane of higher realization. There may be happiness in such a place, but not of the anaesthetic kind. The pain of mortality is not eliminated so much as transcended. Nor can the existence of evil, and its root in egoism, be evaded. Finally, reality is neither shunned nor mystified. There is no essential conflict between an authentically religious attitude and the scientific study of natural objects; indeed, it would harmonize that study.

The religious moment is at the boundary of history and nature. One may pass over the boundary, as extreme mystics do. For the majority who pursue a religious inclination, however, a mediation with mundane existence is required. Here the ineffability of religious experience becomes turned into mystery for the benefit of temporal power. Yet it follows from the nature of the religious experience that this need not be so. The same instant which can serve conformity and repression can be turned against power, precisely because the sacred moment breaks with common speech and the domain of the word that power seeks to define and control.

The critical function of religion is therefore no less inherent than its conformist or

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reactionary possibility. That the latter has mainly prevailed is not the function of religion but of the secular orders into which it has been integrated. Indeed, the predominant guises of religion as "opium of the people," or substitutions for the father, are not the genuine article but bogus accommodations to power. Such religion is theocratic as an indispensible corollary to its sustenance of and by domination. True religion, by contrast, breaks with received authority and mystery, and rejects theocracy and autocracy alike; it could not realize its transcendent mission otherwise. There are only two paths before true religion: either a mystical and visionary withdrawal from the world — the Weberian "rejection" — or a movement toward social transformation that universalizes the prospects for its own attainment. Which of these paths is taken is only partially an individual decision; it is also a function of how religious choices are constituted by the prevailing historical situation. Throughout most epochs, religious individuals have been oriented mainly toward mundane rejection. This is a reflection of the weight of oppression sedimented into the church, and it indicates a limitation of universality and a fetter upon religion itself. However, we now have two major possibilities for a union between religion and emancipatory social change.

The first is the influence of Marxism. Despite their seeming antithesis and frequently acrimonious relations, religion — in particular, Christianity — and Marxism could not avoid a common destiny. Marx's messianism matches Christianity's proselytizing worldliness. From a certain perspective, the two are nothing but successive phases of a millenarian belief system. As such, each has been open to authoritarian as well as liberterian possibilities, and the varying contradictions arising thereby have reached the greatest intensity in Latin America, where they are being played out through the development of the "theology of liberation." That it took more than a century for this conjugation to take hold is not surprising, given the traditionally anti-religious bias of communism and the reactionary inertia of the church. The transformation of Catholic praxis has resulted in a predictable degree of reaction. Yet, liberation theology cannot be crushed, since it rests on Christian tradition itself, betrayed as this may have been. An entirely homologous betrayal by communism of its own emancipatory promise was also drawn into the picture, creating an opening for the religious spirit within Marxism, and countering Marxism's antireligious tradition. Thus Christian Marxism becomes the occasion for synthesis instead of an irreconciliable contradiction. Marxism drove a wedge between religion and its embeddedness in class society, thereby allowing room for the development of religion's emancipatory potential. And from the other side, religious practice drove a wedge between Marxism and its scientific, vulgarly materialistic accretions, acquired in the service of bureaucratic centralism. Christianity, backed by the immense power of the church, could do for Marxism what its various "Western" practitioners have stood for, but were too weak to accomplish in fact. And at the same time, the insistence of Marxism on radical social change has goaded Christianity toward the fulfillment of its own stifled promise.

The second major factor in the resurgence of religious radicalism has been the emergence of the nuclear state and the discreditation of science brought about in its wake. Along with the degradation of the environment, the omnipresence of nuclear weaponry is both the triumph of an unbridled technocracy and its crushing indictment. As the legitimacy of science crumbles under the weight of its missiles, religion, banished to the shadows by the success of the Enlightenment, is restored to its authentic critical voice. Indeed, the rise of Christian antimilitarism, from A.J. Muste through the Berrigans and up to the recent statement of Catholic bishops against the use of nuclear weapons, has in general been well in advance of the traditional Left. And it is

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the core of religious experience — to look death and non-existence in the face and derive faith from the encounter — which has propelled the confrontation with state power.

The traditional Marxist and Freudian critique of religion are simply irrelevant in the face of its role against the nuclear state. The Enlightenment and its traditions are unable to comprehend the life-saving value inherent in the appropriation of the sacred. If the current age is survived, this rapprochement of religion with emancipatory practice will stand as one of its major features.

Jackson Lears: Attitudes toward religion are so deeply rooted in personal experience that I am even warier than usual about making general statements. Certainly I plan no effort to prescribe solutions, only to explore possibilities. My wariness only increases with the realization that there are many people, particularly on the Left, for whom religion will never be more than a set of outmoded and oppressive institutions — no matter what evidence I or anyone else can adduce to the contrary. This hostility to religion can be justified with innumerable historical examples, and doubtless with reference to many bitter personal expereinces. Religious institutions have shown an unending capacity to tyrannize the human spirit and to form legitimizing alliances with wealth and power. But religious institutions have shown many other capacities as well. The conventional secularist wisdom falsifies and distorts the history of religious experience by confining it within a narrow "progressive" framework constructed from the débris of 19th-century liberalism and positivism.

There are also more immediate difficulties with the Left's dismissal of religion. It has isolated Left cultural critics from the millions of ordinary people for whom religion is a crucial component of daily existence; it has also prevented them from realizing that the primary idiom of domination under corporate capitalism is not religious but secular and therapeutic. Still preaching a secular gospel of self-fulfillment, many would-be cultural radicals have failed to see how easily their own views merge with those of professional and managerial elites who promise self-fulfillment through therapy or consumption — without any change in existing social and economic arrangements. Cultural radicals' reflexive dismissal of religion has eased them into accommodation with the dominant culture of mass-marketed chic.

Resistance to that culture can spring from many sources, but it always involves more than refusing to read *Time* magazine or wear Gucci loafers. Genuine resistance requires an alternative set of values, a different sense of the way society could and should be arranged. Religion can promote alternative values in a number of important ways. I'll mention just four, briefly and sketchily.

First, religion can help to provide a moral basis for challenging the irresponsible accumulation of wealth and the unjust assumption of privilege. Theological conservatism, the traditional Christian suspicion of worldliness, has energized populist movements from 19th-century Russia and the United States to 20th-century El Salvador. The leaders of the black Civil Rights Movement of the 1950s and 1960s aroused mass support with the idiom of Afro-American Protestantism. That idiom is still alive among many Americans white and black; it has been and could be used again, by democrats as well as moral majority demagogues.

Second, religious traditions offer a way of challenging the technocratic "pragmatism" that reigns virtually unchallenged as the dominant way of thinking among American policy-making elites. A few years ago a *New York Times* editorial attacked a

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group called the Clamshell Alliance for its opposition to a nuclear power plant near Portsmouth, New Hampshire. The *Times* derisively charged that the Alliance was less interested in politics than in "theology." In a sense, the editorial was correct: unlike the *Times*, the Alliance *was* interested in "theology," in ultimate questions of value and purpose regarding the use of nuclear power in American society. My point is not to vindicate the Alliance's positions or tactics but to suggest that in addressing those ultimate questions they helped to raise public debate above its normal level of endless chatter about how to tinker with this policy or "manage" that "crisis." "Responsible" liberalism has debased the philosophical heritage of pragmatism by focusing on means rather than ends, process rather than results, procedure rather than substance. The culmination of these developments can be seen in the appalling discussions of the nuclear arms race which regularly appear in publications like the *Times* or *The New Republic*. The resurgence of a peace movement among many mainstream religious denominations has shown that religion can still spark resistance to this "tough-minded realism" that is empty of ethical content.

Third, religion provides individuals with the opportunity of transcending the nihilistic self-absorption promoted by our dominant culture. Traditions of self-sacrifice, of mutual dependence and mutual obligation, all help to strengthen commitments outside the self — to community, family, future generations, ideals of social justice. Of course, religion is not a necessary component of those commitments, but a supernatural framework of meaning has often reinforced them in the past. And — whether or not they are undergirded by religion — commitments beyond the self are an indispensable basis for challenging possessive individualism and formulating alternative values. My point is not to launch another diatribe against the Me Genration, but to suggest an obvious way out of the endless cycles of protest and assimilation that mark the history of the American Left in the 20th century.

Finally, for at least some people, religion can help to restore meaning and purpose to everyday life in the modern world. It can at least partially reverse the "decline of the referentials" described by Henri Lefebvre — the tendency, under corporate capitalism, for words and images to become detached from specific referents and dissolve in what Lefebvre called "the floating stock of meaningless signifers." One does not need to argue a pre-capitalist (or pre-secular) unity between word and thing to concede that our dominant culture has acquired an Alice-in-Wonderland quality. Evasion and denial abound; opposites merge, and meaning in general is eroded. The sense of unreality that seems to pervade so many people's lives in the 20th century may well be exacerbated by the counterfeit "real life" offered in national advertising and other image-vending institutions. One might argue that religious cultures of the past were full of floating, meaningless signifiers and absent referents — but that would be to take too literal a view of the way that religion can help to undergird an individual's sense of reality, of meaning and purpose in his life. Even if God, Providence, or heaven were not immediately present in the believer's life, they signified a unifed effort to address fundamental issues in the human condition: the arbitrariness of suffering, the triumph of evil, the conflict between the longing for immortality and the certainty of death. Religion at its best addresses these issues seriously and comprehensively; the secular image makers of our dominant culture merely trivialize or evade them.

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Patrick Murray: The Left's new interest in religion reflects both the history of the New Left as well as recent religious developments. The American New Left was a discontinuous phenomenon; those involved saw themselves as independent radicals for whom the American dream had soured in Selma, Sproul Plaza, and Saigon. The task of unearthing and either appropriating or rejecting Marxist and other critical traditions became important once New Leftists realized that the "war at home" was not going to be won on the crest of any springtime's wave of demonstrations. To get serious about qualitative social change was to think about how to spend one's life, not just spring recess.

But this is the dimension of commitment and faith. Excavation of Marxism showed how much of it was based on (bad) faith that mistook itself for positive science: dialectical and historical materialism. Though nonorthodox Marxists such as Gramsci, Adorno, and Horkheimer burst this bubble some time ago, their own faith was weak. Thus, wrote Adorno and Horkheimer: "if there is anyone today to whom we can pass the responsibilities for the message, we bequeath it not to the 'masses,' and not to the individual (who is powerless), but to an imaginary witness — lest it perish with us." For many New Leftists, the search for a sustaining worldview has led to a kind of agnosticism. Under these circumstances, religion has a special attraction: it can provide roots, it can endure both as a sign of contradiction which transcends the oppressive established order and as a promise of hope for the future, and it can provide embodiments of values and sensibilities.

While the obstinancy of tradition in historical religions such as Judaism and Christianity can block change, tradition is likewise a ballast for hope. Rootedness in tradition entails that things were not always what they are now. Tradition is a hedge against easy accommodation. Those schooled in the Biblical perspective, as opposed to the TV bug, are prepared for the long haul in the struggle for peace, freedom, and happiness. Most fundamentally, the attack on idolatry inherent in Judeo-Christian theism makes it a source of transcendence, which relativizes the established order. And religious life supports a commitment to cultural resistance by preserving in ritual the sense of the sacred, by promoting community life which prefigures the "end times," and by calling individual believers not only to demand social transformation but to seek out reconciliation in their personal lives.

If the Left moves grudgingly to consider religion as a footing for human emancipation, it is in part a legacy of Marx's own critique of religion. Indeed, Marx's attacks on religion have rested secure within the hurricane of recent criticism of Marxism. It is time to disturb that tranquility. Marx was not an original contributor to the Young Hegelian critique of religion. Rather, he enthusiastically adopted Feuerbach's account of religion, criticized Feuerbach for not tracing the roots of the heavenly family back to the divided earthly family, and generalized the logic of religious alienation into a model of political and economic alienation. Among the Feuerbachian claims that Marx adopted are some according to which religion is an obstacle to human emancipation. God and the heavenly host are strictly alienated products of the human imagination. Religion degrades humanity since our relation to God is a kind of zero-sum game: the more reality to God, the less reality for humanity. To worship God is to desecrate humanity. The otherwordly preoccupations of religion lead it to gloss over or rationalize worldly misery. Even the aspirations which Judaism and Christianity project heavenward are defective: Judaism is motivated by a crude practical egoism, which Christianity only refines into a more sublime utilitarianism.

None of these claims hold up well today. Feuerbach arrives at the conclusion that

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God is merely a human product by selectively applying the standpoints of absolute idealism and positivist empiricism. He applies the idealist proposition: "the object of any subject is nothing else than the subject's own nature taken objectively," without any limitation in the case of the religious object, but with limitations in the case of sensuous objects. No justification is given for this double standard, but one easily recognizes Feuerbach's dubious positivism as the unspoken basis for the claim. Though misanthropy and otherworldliness persist in the Judeo-Christian tradition, to hear this alone is to arbitrarily deafen oneself to the more humane and healthy sounds of religion. To see egoism as the spirit of Judaism and Christianity is to present a one-sided vision of these religions which projects the modern capitalist ethos back thousands of years. Thus, it is not surprising that Marx found such a congenial model of modern political and economic alienation in Feuerbach's critique of religion. In Marx's hands, the Feuerbachian logic of alienation yields more insight into the idolatry of capitalism than into the essence of Judaism or Christianity.

Even on the basis of Marx's thinking, the Left should be upset at religion's dissipation or eradication in capitalist and communist societies. When opium — or its substitutes: alcohol, Pac-man, television, sports spectaculars — becomes the opiate of the people, the human preconditions for qualitative social change are missing. Habermas has talked about the motivation crisis in late capitalism, but banal, narcissistic irreligion provokes a motivation crisis for the Left as well. After all, Marx called for the *Aufhebung* of religion, not its blank erradication: "criticism has plucked the imaginary flowers from the chain, not in order that man shall bear the chain without caprice or consolation but so that he shall cast off the chain and pluck the living flower." Today, we defoliate the imaginary flowers and strap on a Sony Walkman over our chains.

It is time to shed the conventional Marxist wisdom that shelves religion with the rest of ideologies, along with the aprioristic theory of historical materialism it presupposes. Rather than roll over and play dead when reactionary religion claims God and tradition for its side, the Left should appeal to the religious tradition in equally public ways. Believers on the Left should take the lead in forging a religious legitimation for emancipatory politics. Though the compatibility of religion with Marxism is a hot topic, there is every reason to call into question the compatibility of religion with capitalist practices. As exemplified by the recent popal encyclical on work, there is no shortage of official religious documents to support this task.

James A. Ogilvy: Asking Marxists to take religion seriously is like asking astronomers to talk about astrology: in both cases the offense taken reflects a contempt bred of unacknowledged familiarity. Just as astronomy claims to have achieved the disenchangment of the heavens, so Marxism would disenchant the earth.

But Hegel has the last laugh. As he wrote in the *Phenomenology's* chapter on "The Battle of Enlightenment with Superstition," the means and claims of the dialectically opposed forces come to mimic one another. They both "turn over into their opposites." Secular science becomes religious and religion becomes scientific. And so it has come to pass, both with religion, and with that brand of socialism that, in Engels' famous title, was to be scientific rather than utopian.

Updating the earliest attempts at evidential support for religion — the quest for the historical Jesus — we now see a whole range of disparate attempts to support spirituality with science: from the lumpen preoccupation with "creation science" to the more sophisticated *Tao of Physics*.

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The religious shadow of secular Enlightenment was and is a subtler business than religion's self-defeating grasp at scientific support. It was Hegel's genius to see through Enlightenment rationalism to its religious fundamentalism — the One Truth of a unified realm of law. And it has been the Achilles' heel of Marxism not to acknowledge the wisdom of Hegel's analysis: not to acknowledge its own religious character, and hence to ignore the nature and power of religious dynamics within its own ranks.

Critics aplenty have pointed to the character of Marxism as a religion. In *Philosophy and Myth in Karl Marx*, for example, Robert Tucker points to four great affinities between Marxism and Christianity: 1) a totality of scope that touches every realm of human activity; 2) a developmental, historical orientation very similar to Augustinian eschatology: 3) for the individual the hope of salvation that comes with liberation not from sin but from enslavement; and, finally 4) a unity of theory and practice.

Of course Tucker has been attacked, and on many points with good reason. But the attacks themselves prove Hegel's contention: that the high church of secularism practices an apologetics that has no rival for casuistry. See, for example, István Mészáros' Talmudic response to Tucker in a six-page footnote 209, in *Marx's Theory of Alienation*. Aside from ignoring Tucker's four basic points, Mészáros protesteth too much — a sure sign of a repression of the shadow. And as it is written (by Whitmont in *The Symbolic Quest*), just when you think you do not have your shadow, that's when it has you.

So it is with Marxism: its character *as* a religion has been denied, thus inducing a characteristic blind-spot regarding the power of the religious impulse in the people it would secularize.

The Marxist rejection of religion is very much of a piece with a seemingly unrelated failing: the Soviets' overestimation of centralized planning. Here again one sees an almost Cartesian rationalism at work, as if the calculating mind were bound to be a better indicator of people's needs than the so-called "anarchy of the market." Yet, look at the plight of the planned economies!

A third piece in the puzzle: not until the 1970s did Soviet psychology officially recognize the existence of the unconscious. Prior to that time, dabbling in dreams was rejected as so much bourgeois subjectivism.

Thus, the neglect of religion is not a remediable mistake that can be patched up with a little quick scholarship. It is part of a pattern of Marxist hyper-intellectualism. Marxism consistently overestimates the power of conscious mind over myths, markets and fantasies. This tendency toward rationalism is the reason for Marxism's greater appeal to intellectuals than to the proletariat it would supposedly serve.

How badly has Marxism missed the boat where religion is concerned? Twice over: first regarding the speed of secularization, second, regarding the relation between religion and political activity.

As for secularization, have people set aside religion like an old set of clothing that no longer fits? In a recent poll conducted by Stanford Research Institute, 62.5% responded: Yes, the world really was created in six days, just as the Bible says. Read it and weep!

Second, the opium question: Is religion a soporific that robs people of their will or strength to engage in political activity? A recent study on values in the 80s came up with findings that surprised the researchers (John Pollock, *et al*, supported by the Connecticut Mutual Life Insurance Company): they found that the highest correlation between a social conscience and any other attribute was the correlation between religious conviction and political activism.

To summarize: Marxism has missed the boat where religion is concerned. But

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remedial activity is not likely to allow Marxists to catch the next ferry to the promised land. For the failure is fundamental — far deeper than any marshalling of footnotes will fix.

One needn't side with the neo-conservatives to conclude that Marxism's picture of the role of rationality in human affairs is wrong. It is not a matter of admitting that "the poor will always be with us," or that the evil in the heart of human character cannot be expunged. One can hold a position far more progressive than Adam Smith's exaltation of greed. But whatever position one comes to regarding the inexpungible role of the religious impulse, it better be a long way from Marx's. For the world will never be utterly disenchanted.

Robert A. Pois: From his "mattress-grave," the poet Heine spoke of God, the "Aristophenes of Heaven," with his usual pungent wit. Yet at the same time he possessed that terrible sense of loss felt by a creature who took seriously — apparently more seriously than God Himself — the notion of humankind's being made in God's image, and thus necessarily transcendent.

This human quest, this heroic-tragic searching for transcendence, is at the core of the Judaeo-Christian tradition. The "God of History" provided a point of departure for the presumably dereified idea of humankind becoming whole in time — a notion which subsists at the heart of Marxist historical speculation. History, as the process by virtue of which we are taught to appreciate alienation and the means by which this is to be overcome, has come to us as probably the most crucial legacy of a tradition in which the transcendent God has chosen to impart a bit of this quality to human beings. Naturally, this has had the effect of suspending them in a discomfiting posture between natural urges and the divine plan.

Of course, the Baron d'Holbachs, Feuerbachs, and Marxes of this world chose not to leave well enough alone; for them, humans were to attain wholeness on their own. Yet, Marx, at least, never saw atheism as something absolutely necessary to elevate humans out of that spiritual *cul de sac* which was presumably the result of the vicissitudes of class relationships. The reactionary stances of various organized religions might well have summoned forth impassioned (and often misdirected) emphases upon the phrase "opiate of the masses." But, there is nothing in historical materialism *per se* which would suggest that "religion" (to use Feuerbach's distinction — "religion as distinct from 'theology' ") looms large as the enemy.

Today, in fact, we are confronted with the phenomenon of religion seemingly on the cutting edge of human liberation. In Iran, Shiite orthodoxy, apotheosized in the Ayatollah Khomeini, has swept away the apparently last vestiges of Western imperialism. In Poland, the Solidarity movement has found a constant source of support in the church, one whose humanism must be seen as being rooted in orthodox conceptions of human dignity. "Liberation theology" has found concrete representation in the heroic struggles — and, in some cases, martyrdom — of clergymen in Central America, and in the Basic Christian Communities of Brazil, where biblical exegesis in a grass-root setting has brought out the "social justice" aspect of the Judaeo-Christian tradition in ways curiously reminiscent of Thomas Münzer. Certainly, particularly in view of the historically conservative role of religion, these must be seen as significant.

And they are, even if examination of these impressive phenomena reveals problems. In Iran, which gives us perhaps the most impressive example of religion acting as revolutionary agent, the "problems" are particularly acute. Here, liberation has

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been wedded to self-flagellation, mass executions, effective regulation of women to *purdah*, and a veritable *jihad* against Iraq, in which tens of thousands of lives have been lost in mass attacks against a foe perceived as satanic. In all of this, it has been most difficult to draw any sort of meaningful line between Shiite orthodoxy and the most primitive nationalism imaginable. This is no doubt due to the fact that there probably is no such line to be drawn. Liberation-from-exploitation has turned out to be spiritual liberation from the twentieth century on the way towards the world-to-come. Nationalism and supernaturalism have been fused and, under the circumstances, the support of the Moscow-oriented Tudeh Party — whose own variety of "satanism" could well land it in the soup someday — must be assessed as something informed by opportunism. At the same time, the "liberating" aspects of the Iranian experience must be viewed as having been seriously compromised, if not nullified, by this mind-deadening combination.

The case of Poland presents a different problem. Up until World War II, the Polish church and Polish nationalism generally went together, the principled anti-communism of the former finding ample resonance in the generally reactionary orientation of the latter. Interwar reactionaries, while not exactly working hand-in-glove with the church, could count on a strong measure of at least implicit support from it, particularly at the local level. Moreover, virtually all nationalistic Polish politicians — with the exception of Marshal Pilsudski — were anti-Semitic, reflecting, it must be said, the general feeling of the Polish people. Furthermore, during the course of Poland's liberation in 1944, the pro-Soviet "Lublin Poles" often raised the charges of reactionary tendencies and anti-Semitism against the "London Poles," the more-or-less generally accepted government-in-exile. While the motivation of the Lublin Poles was most assuredly questionable, the charges were no doubt largely true. In recent years, of course, the anti-Semitism of the Polish church has been sharply reduced while, for its part, the Polish government, in confronting various economic crises mostly of its own making, has not hesitated, through frequent "anti-Zionist" attacks, to play upon popular feelings. It has done this despite the fact that there are now less than 30,000 Jews (out of a prewar population of about 3,000,000) left in Poland.

Thus, the following picture has emerged in Poland: a "national-socialist" government — in the literal sense of the term — at times playing on the most reactionary sentiments of the Polish people, has found itself confronted by a putatively progressive labor rebellion, the most notable example of which has been Solidarity. Both the labor rebellion in general and Solidarity in particular have been infused with many of the values of "Catholic Poland," and, while understandably cautious, the Polish church has lent a great deal of support to this rebellion. There can be no doubt that, in this respect, the church has thrust itself forward as a defender of the most progressive elements of the Judaeo-Christian tradition. Nevertheless, as gleeful religious conservatives in the West have pointed out with justification, the Polish church is still fundamentally conservative, particularly in its strong emphasis upon salvation and supernaturalism as opposed to a general commitment to progressive social involvement. There is no "liberation theology" in Poland. Rather what we can now see is a church which stands for a "Catholic Poland" of family traditionalism and sexual orthodoxy. These, combined with the hope of salvation, have always been central to religion's role, not only in Poland, but in Eastern Europe in general, where the realities of everyday life have necessitated transforming seemingly given necessities into millenial virtues.

In Central America, and in such things as the Basic Christian Communities in

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Brazil, one can see a "liberation theology" at work. This theology is rooted in progressive Judaeo-Christian concepts of human dignity which may be devoid of the kind of holy-war fanaticism one sees in Iran (although it is admittedly hard to tell, since this theology has yet to attain political power). This liberation theology contains much that is positive. Yet, once humanistically-informed biblical exegesis has served the purpose of persuading the tormented *campesino* that he or she is a child of God, and that this awareness must be translated into political action, what then? We are still confronted with the question of whether supernaturalism is supportive of, or even coextensive with, progressive humanism. Particularly if one accepts the notion that belief in a supernatural being is in large measure a result of guilt, then it would seem that only a totally humanistic religion could offer itself as an answer. Even if we ignore the probability that such a religion would be a contradiction in terms, there is little reason to think that updated versions of the Comtean model, or of various Utopian enthusiasms, would be any more attractive now than they were in the last century. In the end, certain hopefully transcendable human needs seem to call for supernaturalism in one form or another and this creates difficulties since, if Reich is correct, mysticism in politics must always end up being reactionary.

It is worth repeating: the notion of human transcendence necessarily central to progressive thinking of any kind — that variety of speculation which is crucial to the praxis of liberation — comes out of the Judaeo-Christian tradition. Divested of orthodoxy's ceremonial robes, this tradition has given us two very realistic perceptions of human beings: (1) they are inherently "questing" creatures, seeking always to pass beyond the natural givens of their existences, and (2) these quests are always informed by mixed motives since human beings (as, in the words of the psalmist, "little lower than the angels") are both divine and natural. To be possessed of an aspect of divinity whose existential expression is transcendence, and at the same time being placed in the position of potentially losing it, puts these creatures in a fearful position. Here we must appreciate the grim perceptivity reflected in satan's being depicted as a fallen angel. From this perspective, we see that efforts undertaken by humans, perhaps *particularly* those armed with doctrines of a seemingly transcendent nature, to limit or end transcendence, are *evil*. Those "little lower than the angels" cannot strive to pass beyond transcending and *become* angels. At such a point, we fall from our own grace, this process necessarily being marked by the appearance of an Auschwitz or a Gulag Archipelago. Everything has been turned in upon itself, and the earth-bound angel has itself become "the Aristophanes of Heaven."

For progressive movements of any kind, religion in its "orthodox" aspect — to be blunt, religion in any sort of "other-worldly" sense — is useless, at times, worse than useless. Wilhelm Reich was correct. A God which is the creator of masturbatory guilt is something useful only in frightening children. The political and social expression of such guilt has to be, in the end, reactionary. A religious tradition, however, which is the source of the categorical imperative *and* of the idea that "economic man" is an untoward and ultimately insufficient creature, can be of immense value for progressives, and this has been demonstrated in Central America, Brazil and, to a lesser extent, in Poland. It can be an inexhaustible source for humanism's renewal, a reminder that, after all, a large measure of what makes us human is our separation from nature. It can also remind us that an equally large measure of what makes us human is the persistence of our earth-bound aspects. Transcending, finite beings strive to end transcendence at their peril. Reaffirmation "without end" of this ultimate truth must be the continuously adumbrated lesson of the Judaeo-Christian tradition.

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Joan Roelofs: *Only* religion contains a potential for human emancipation. This is not to deny the historical and continuous use of religion as a tool of oppression, but that is only one side of the story. All dreams of emancipation — from the Old Testament prophets to Herbert Marcuse — are essentially religious ideas. They have little connection with everyday rationality and no scientific support. "Religious" ideas are those which imply transcendence. This does not (for me as an atheist) include belief in the supernatural. However, supernatural religious ideas have emancipatory potential just the same. "Emancipation" has a twofold implication: release from social, political and economic oppression, and release from the fears, worries and ruminations that plague us, regardless of our material situation. Both Marxism and Freudianism are essentially religious ideas and processes. (Even Fabian socialism developed from an attempt to create a religious community, "The Fellowship of the New Life"). Feuerbach's identification of man and God is in itself a religious idea. It laid nothing to rest, but describes an ongoing process at the "emancipatory edge" of theology.

In contrast to religious visions of human emancipation, the noblest secular visions are either those of a primitive tribal community, harmonious and stable, or those of a more sophisticated tribalism presented by B.F. Skinner in *Walden Two*. The power of liberation theology in Latin America may have lessons for social change in the U.S. First of all, activities carried out under religious auspices have some immunity from interference by governmental authorities because of laws and ideology favoring separation of church and state. Similarly, conservative communities will be more receptive to radical ideas wearing the cowl (legitimately, I maintain) of religion. Consequently, activism based on religion enjoys more freedom than other forms.

There is a positive side as well. Religiously based activism has more energy. The personal support provided by religious communities enables its participants to engage in heroic, difficult acts. These would not be justified if the goal were a mere secular vision — say, of obtaining higher social security benefits. They would not be possible if each actor had to calculate the costs and benefits in terms of personally provided social and material security for self and family. The Catholic Workers' movement, groups of nonviolent resisters, civil rights workers, were energized by communal ties as well as ideas of transcendence.

Many people are attracted to evangelical religious groups (not all of which are of a "moral majority" bent) because their atmosphere is warm and loving. The typical Marxist or anti-Marxist leftist study group or whatever would spread a gelatinous mass over hell. Indications for future work: the Left should model itself on egalitarian radical religious communities.

Rudolf J. Siebert: Throughout the 19th century and into the early decades of the 20th century, the Hegelian Left freed itself from belief in the existence of a divine power independent from society and history but nevertheless governing both. Without this kind of "atheism" — which one finds from Feuerbach and Marx all the way to Bloch, Lukács, Korsch, and Horkheimer — there can not even be the beginning of human emancipation.

But between the two world wars it became clear to this Hegelian Left how difficult it is to avoid turning precisely this atheism into a new religion, thereby jeopardizing human enlightenment and liberation once more. As long as the horror and terror of nature, of society and history, of life and death has not been overcome at least partially through the work of a just society, people will be inclined to take refuge in an attitude which has about it something of the otherworldly silence of the old temples. In a world

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historical situation in which human society has not advanced further than we are now, a society in which evil increases qualitatively, even the most "progressive" human beings still experience moments in which they are drawn toward religion. It also happens, when people are thrown into dark times, that the concept of God becomes the place where discredited, non-instrumental values and norms are kept alive. Western Marxists retrieved the insight that men's and women's dissatisfaction with their earthly destiny is the strongest subjective motive for the acceptance of a transcendent being — not, of course, for its objective existence. If absolute truth and justice reside with God, then it is not to be found in the same measure in the world of nature, the personal world, or the social and cultural world. Religion as system of interpretation and orientation is the record of the wishes, hopes, longings, desires and accusations of countless generations. It is the expression of a people's real distress and their protest against that distress; it is not a hindrance to human emancipation, but a reservoir of ideals for liberation.

Particularly after World War II, it seemed to many that humankind was losing its sense of religion as it moved through history. But this loss left its mark behind. Part of the drives and desires, longings and hopes for absolute justice, which religious belief once preserved and kept alive, have now been detached from an inhibiting religious form and have become active forces for human enlightenment and emancipation. In this process, the immoderation characteristic of scattered religious illusions acquires a positive form and is truly transformed. Thus, in a really emancipated person, the concept of the Absolute, the Infinite, the Ultimate Reality is preserved in the awareness of the finality of human life and of the unalterable aloneness of men and women on this earth.

The Hegelian Left, in the process of de-mystifying religion, never confused the sharp boundary line between emancipation and redemption. Only the Messiah or Christ Himself consummates all history. Nothing social, political, or historical can relate itself on its own account to anything messianic. The Kingdom of God is not the goal of the social, political, or historical process. In historical perspective, the messianic realm is not the goal but the end. The order of the profane cannot be built on the idea of God's kingdom. Theocracy has only a religious meaning. It has no political significance. It is the goal of redemption, not of emancipation. Bloch and Benjamin have made that clear once and for all.

The order of the secular must therefore be erected on the idea of emancipation and happiness. But this does not eliminate the important ties that link the profane order to the messianic realm. This point can be represented figuratively. If one arrow points to the goal of emancipation toward which profane history moves, and another arrow marks the direction of messianic intensity toward redemption, then certainly the quest of free humanity for emancipation and happiness runs counter to the messianic direction toward redemption. But just as a force can, through acting, increase another that is acting in the opposite direction, so the order of the secular world assists through being profane, the coming of the messianic kingdom. The profane, therefore, although not itself a category of God's kingdom, is nevertheless a decisive category. The main concern of the Hegelian Left is emancipation. But it gives rise to the idea of redemtpion and vice versa. Emancipation and redemption are separate, but also inseparable. They reproduce each other in their utter difference. Emancipation withers away into the totally administered society if it is uncoupled from the idea of redemption. The emancipatory impulse needs the redemptory corrective, if it is not to end up in individual or collective terrorism. The redemptive impulse needs the emancipatory corrective if it

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is to have any impact on the political and historical process.

Today, for the Hegelians of the Left there is good and bad religion. Good religion is the impulse, carried through counter-factually and not yet suffocated by overadministration, which demands that the ban of injustice be broken and that things turn toward what is right. Where life stands in this sign of emancipation down to every single gesture, there indeed is good religion. But not everywhere, where there is religion, is there also emancipation. Bad religion is this very same impulse, but perverted into affirmation, into *kerygma*. It is the impulse to gild the reality of evil. According to this perverted religion, the suffering of life and the terror of history have a meaning, be it a relative earthly meaning or an absolute heavenly one. This lie does not even need the cross. It lives already in the ontological notion of "transcendence" or "being." By contrast, when the religious impulse is for justice, or the hope that the murderer will not triumph over the innocent victim, it is honest and does not need any apology.

It has become only too obvious that religion contains ideological as well as utopian, integrative as well as emancipatory elements. It has been the mistake of the Hegelian Left for sometime to share in the error of the Hegelian Right and its positivistic heirs, that religion is nothing else than a mechanism for social control, integration, equilibration and stability. But many, now, have begun to correct this mistake. They have started to discover in feudal and bourgeois religion the hidden seeds of messianic religion. For a long time the dialectical materialists were not dialectical enough in their relation to religious worldviews. They took religious systems of interpretation and orientation as homogenous instead of contradictory. All this means that the Hegelians on the Left must from now on treat religion as they have treated art and philosophy before, namely, dialectically. The irrational aspects of religious authorities and traditions, which suffocate human emancipation, must be attacked. The prophetic, messianic elements in religious traditions and authorities, which enhance the emancipatory process, must be retrieved.

Dorthee Soelle: I want to argue that religion is emancipatory because, very simply, it is one of the few things we have left today which can link us to transcencence and save us from banality. The outcome of the Enlightenment project (which continues through Feuerbach and others as well) to discredit religion, to see it as merely a human creation, has been that we are now left without access to anything transcendental. The "loss" of this dimension has produced a host of secondary consequences which we are only now beginning to understand. A totally secular culture, which once seemed so desirable to many thinkers, has come to be experienced by millions as something essentially shallow if not completely bankrupt. Where once people practiced religion, about the only thing many of them now engage in "religiously" is consuming.

I want to make my point more personal by talking about two people I know. They are both women of the rural lower class, German, now in their early 60s, deeply affected by the experiences of the Second World War and the post-war period.

Frau K. has been widowed for five years. At the end of the war she fled from Pomerania to Hamburg. Since the death of her husband she has rented out two rooms in her apartment to supplement her pension. Her tenants and the neighbor across the hall are almost the only people with whom she maintains any contact. Her life consists of keeping up the apartment, grocery-shopping — sometimes for the tenants as well — and cooking for herself alone. In the afternoon she often watches television. She barely reads, occasionally *Bunte*. It is difficult to converse with her; although she talks a lot, her vocabulary is minimal.

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Frau S. lives in a village in Saarland, where she was born. She lost her husband in the war and has visited his grave every day for 30 years. She raised five children, three of whom still live in the village and visit her Sundays after church. She lives in the household of one of her daughters, and in the mornings one might suspect that her daily life is hardly different from that of Frau K. Grocery shopping, housecleaning, cooking, sewing. In the afternoons Frau S. often retires to her room for a while. Then she reads her prayer book or simply sits with folded hands in the dim room. Religion is part of her life. On Sundays she goes to Mass, and sees to it that the grandchildren go as well. Religion is also an essential part of Frau S.'s social life. She reads the parish newsletter and rails at the pastor. Both these things integrate her into the village life.

Frau K. in Hamburg lives free of religion. Though superficially Christianized as a child, she was not deeply affected by religion: it never meant anything to her. Her system of values seems to be remarkably neutralized. Her relationship to her neighbors is a tense "keeping up with the Joneses," in consumption and following the rules of bourgeois decency. Concern for the cleanliness of the apartment and of her own body, and for health, fill out her life. Her living room is permanently neat and sterile. For her, living free of religion means being cut off, no past and no future, no sympathy and no guilt feelings, no self-doubt, no big questions such as: Where are we going? Where did we come from? What is the meaning of life?

Of course, Frau S. doesn't ask herself these questions explicitly either. Nevertheless, they are present for her, because her life has so many more dimensions. When a neighbor boy dies in a motorcycle accident, she said — addressed to the Lord God — "Why did that have to happen?" Frau K., in a similar situation, said "And his parents had put so much into him."

Perhaps the point has become clear that without religion it is easy to slip into the triviality of everyday life — a triviality not informed by any larger framework of meaning. Banality is always waiting there, waiting to present itself without struggle.

Frau K. is an example of how deep, real human wishes can become silenced or suffocated, and their passionate energies diverted into completely different channels. "Consume!" becomes the categorical imperative, whose rule for conduct can be applied at all times to everyone. In view of the total reification of relationships, one can say by comparison that Frau S.'s expectations of and wishes for life are infinitely higher than those of Frau K. Her love for life and her participation in living go infinitely further. Pain and joy, desires and fears run infinitely deeper than in Frau K.'s life.

"Banality is the counter-revolution." (Isaac Babel). Religion is the revolt against banality, both individual and institutionalized. It sets up special days, the festivals, and the rituals over against the routines of normal life. By contrast, living without religion means, for example, that for Frau K. Sundays are not differentiated from work days. Also in her daily life, myths and rituals are completely lacking, unless one wants to regard certain attitudes encouraged by advertising as a substitute for them. Hence, Frau K.'s religionlessness appears essentially as reduction, impoverishment, and loss, not the triumph it was expected to be by the prophets of secularization from the Enlightenment era until today.

It goes without saying that religion is only *one* factor in a complex network of values that explains the differences between Frau K. and Frau S. It is nevertheless true that religion — and the sense of connectedness it brings through rituals — makes Frau S. a "freer," more aware, more involved and concerned individual than Frau K. The only ritual which a woman like Frau K. follows with almost religious fervor is admittedly a modern one: shopping. The trip to the store is the trip to Holy Mass. The ritual has its

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rules: one must be prepared, well-dressed, one must know the secular equivalent of songs and prayers (i.e., the special offers and prices). Frau S.'s life is in comparison much richer, because it has more of what religion always promised, transcendence. I want to show what that means by way of a last political point. Frau K. knows almost nothing about hunger in the world. Since she essentially watches light entertainment, talk shows and mild thrillers, she is politically uninformed to an extent which people with a middle-class education can hardly imagine. On the other hand, Frau S. hears about hunger again and again in church, through Caritas, the parish youth group and collections. She is in the position to connect what she hears with her own experiences at the end of the war. Her memory remains part of her life, because she again and again experiences transcendence of self. She is defined by connectedness. It should be kept in mind here that social workers and politicians — not to mention businessmen — prefer people like Frau K. because, being less communicative and less active, they are easier to manipulate and control.

My fear for those like Frau K. who are cut off and dead, and my interest in the simplest form of transcendence, which is now getting to be almost beyond the reach of the middle class, is at the same time a way of taking sides with those who have turned religion into *a word of liberation*. It is difficult for me to see how anything can grow out of disconnectedness, out of existence without religion and communication. *Au fond*, religious existence is a deeply rooted bringing to birth of unification. Oneness with all that lives is its object; becoming one and leaving particularity is what is practiced in ritual and prayer. This suspension of isolated-particular existence is not what early liberal and industrial proletarian criticism of religion wanted to eliminate. Rather, it assumed precisely the capacity for generalization of particular interests in its understanding of the pathos of humanity. The claims of the socialist movement have always had humanitarian orientation.

The prayers of the Roman liturgy express this becoming one through liturgical formulae. The congregation prays "with all Christianity, with the heavens and seraphim, 'Holy, holy, holy.' Therefore we (the local congregation) sing, with the angels and archangels (the heavenly congregation), with the thrones and dominions (cosmic beings in the spheres of heaven) and with all the hosts of heaven (of all times) the high song of your glory, and cry out without ceasing, 'Holy, holy, holy.' "

I would like to formulate somewhat more carefully Berdyaev's famous saying that human beings are, underneath it all, incurably religious, by saying that disconnectedness from transcendence invariably destroys people, both psychologically and socially. I also know that one cannot simply sing the *Sanctus* again, but perhaps a task in these dark times would be to keep the wish alive to sing with everyone, including the dead and the cosmos. The situation of the white, rich middle class in a world full of starving people is one of disconnectedness. We have built a wall out of weapons and the dictatorship of capital. Reunification with the hopes and struggles of humanity, in which we, behind our wall, have no part, would be a step in the direction of what Ernst Bloch called "transcending without transcendence." The revolt against banality, against industrial society, against disconnectedness must include the liberating potential of religion.*

*Translated from German by Tory Rhodin.

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Amedeo Vigorelli: I must admit a certain unease with a topic such as "the rebirth of the sacred." Various sociological analyses or political judgments concerning religiously-inspired movements (their taking root, their practice) should be distinguished from a theoretical reflection on religion. As for the first point, it is difficult to claim that there has been an expansion or retreat of the sacred among advanced industrial societies. Sociological analyses of this are not lacking, but they do not come to definitive results. Much depends on one's viewpoint, the definition of the "sacred" and of "religion," the analytic tools used, value judgments, etc. At times, the same phenomena can be seen as processes of "secularization" or of "redefinition" of religious discourse (consider the overcoming of certain forms of political engagement among Catholics after Vatican II, of the end of political collaboration between the Church and Christian-Democratic Parties, etc.). Moreover, the discourse varies significantly from country to country, from situation to situation, and generalizations are dangerous.

In the European context, the phenomenon which has contributed to setting off religious movements has been the election of the Polish Pope. Much has been written about Wojtyla's political and religious doctrine, and the judgments are varied. The subject can be divided into three parts: the Pope's national origin, his "universal" political outlook, and the Catholic world's reactions. One must obviously distinguish between the Catholic Church in Poland and Solidarity, but there is no doubt that the specificity of Catholicism in that country is a national characteristic. The political impact of Polish Catholicism cannot be dissociated from the national patriotism of the Church there (which is much greater than that of the Communist Party). A somewhat rough but helpful scheme might relate the political force of Polish Catholicism to the weak roots of the nation-state of that country. As in other times in European history, an aspect of political "backwardness" turns into the radicalization of an ideological element, in this case religion, but in others philosophy or art. Whether it be the Madonna rather than the *Volksgeist* or Verdi's music which becomes a national symbol is not irrelevant, but not decisive either.

But the Polish Pope is also the bearer of a universalistic political design, which makes judgments still more complex and problematic. While the idea of a united and Christian Europe, from the Atlantic to the Urals, may have propaganda value — it is certainly a challenge to the socialist "halving" of the continent — it appears burdened by a questionable Eurocentrism and recalls an anachronistic reappearance of a "temporal" image of Catholicism.

There remains the problem of the reactions to the Pope in the Catholic world. The Pope's action here is tied up with, among other things, the effects of the "liberal" papacy of the preceding popes (John XXIII and Paul VI) and the "long wave" of Vatican II. The same Pontiff appears in a contradictory light, both as the continuator of the Vatican II "revolution from above" and as the restorer of a neo-conservative image of Catholicism. What one can say, is that his insistence on certain dogmatic theses will not help dialogue with other Christian sects and with non-Christians — Wojtyla's popularity among conservative Anglicans notwithstanding.

Moving from political judgments to a philosophical reflection concerning religion, it is impossible to mechanically transfer sympathies or antipathies towards some religious phenomena to the level of theoretical reflection. What I disagree with is the attitude of some leftists who transform judgments concerning religions into the judgments made by Marx or other Marxists. The political crisis of the Left becomes shortcircuited with the theoretical crisis of Marxism, often with the ridiculous consequence of a spilling over into religion of Marxists' "deluded revolutionary hopes"

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(Popper's writings here are instructive).

Marx said many things on religion, and one should not reduce this to a vulgar positivism (the "opiate of the people," etc.). One of the most significant religious questions of Marx's time was the "Jewish Question" (see a recent study, L. Parinetto and L. Sichirollo, *Marx e Shylock*, [Milan, 1982]) which today is seen differently, if not truly reversed (as in the "Palestinian Question"). Here we move on a "liberated" terrain where there are many positions concerning the Marxism-religion relation: Marxist-Christians (Girardi), theologians of hope (Moltmann), theologians of revolution (Metz), Blochians of various types, etc., such that it is ridiculous to find Marxists tied most closely to a dogmatic concept of religion. I think that the central point of the critique made by Feuerbach and the young Marx can be defended, provided that one does not fall into too naturalistic a vision of religious "need."

The last question asks: what practical attitude ought Marxists (or ex-Marxists) assume toward religious movements? Naturally, one must know *which* movements. One thing, however, ought *not* be done: to think that a practical influence on these movements can derive from a modification of the idea that Marxists have of religion (this might, if anything, be of help to Marxists). What Marxists (and the Left in general) must modify is their *idea of socialism* and the radical objectives of their politics. If the Christian outlook today appears in certain situations more radical than the atomic peace guaranteed by "really existing socialism," that is not the result of a religious critique developed by Marxism, but of a socialism that Marxists (among others) knew how to construct.*

**Translated by Frank Adler*

Joel Whitebook: It is only proper that a general statement of one's views on the emancipatory potential of religion begins with a few personal remarks to orient the reader. This is especially true when one claims no special expertise on the subject and can only hope to offer more or less well-informed prejudices.

The two most pertinent facts in my case are the following. First, characterologically, I am fundamentally areligious — in contrast to an anti-religious. To be sure, my libertarian sensibilities can cause me to have strong anti-clerical feelings. But the struggle against the repressions of organized religion has not been an important theme in my life. What is more important in this context is the fact that the religious experience has by and large remained foreign to me; I have not encountered it, nor do I desire it — except perhaps out of curiosity. With Heine and Freud, I am content to leave the heavens to the angels and the sparrows. At the same time, my identity is inextricably connected with the fact that I am Jewish. At the level of lived experience, my outlook on life has been deeply colored by the fact that I was raised as a Jew. And at the level of values, my identification with the secular Jewish intellectual tradition is perhaps the single most important component of my ego-ideal. This combination of areligiosity and Jewishness is, needless to say, a familiar one.

Let me state outright that my heart still belongs to the militant Enlightenment, however unfashionable that position may be today on the Left as well as on the Right. It is simply a fact that I am drawn to Beethoven, Marx and Freud, not to Wagner, Heidegger and Jung. I detest anything that smacks of obscurantism, mysticism and "encrustedness." My tastes are basically "materialist" and I have no feel for the otherworldly. Most importantly I continue to subscribe to rational autonomy as the fundamental norm of my ethical, social and political thinking. The difficulty arises not

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with the adherence to this norm, but with my ability to justify it. For if the norm of rational autonomy itself cannot be critically grounded, then one's "faith in reason" amounts to no more than another dogmatically held belief. Indeed this is the type of argument one often hears these days: that the Enlightenment has not been capable of grounding its own norms and has thereby failed to fulfill the very program of rational self-justification it presupposes in its criticism of other traditions. It is then concluded that occidental rationalism is merely one tradition among many, possessing no special status, and that witchcraft is as valid as science, autocracy as valid as democracy, and heteronomy as valid as autonomy.

There is a crucial point that it has taken the Enlightenment some time to realize about itself. In its more classical phase, the Enlightenment sought to provide foundations for itself that would be every bit as emphatic as the foundations provided by religion and traditional ontology. The "natural light of reason" would replace divine revelation. And it is in terms of this self-proclaimed program that the Enlightenment is often judged and found wanting. But this program itself was the result of an Enlightenment that had not become sufficiently radical and self-conscious about its own nature. After the decentering of consciousness that occurred with the advent of modernity, it became inappropriate to ask for the type of absolute grounding that the Enlightenment originally sought to provide. While it took some time to realize this point, the quest for an absolute ground, as it is found in religion and first philosophy, is a holdover from premodern, traditionalist consciousness. Ultimately, I would argue, it represents an immature wish for the security of absolute parental (if not paternal) authority. The search for the *arche* of all things in rational thought derives from the search for the primal progenitor of all things in mythical thought. The real problem arises with the nihilistic conclusions that Nietzsche and later day Nietzscheans tried to draw from the insight into the impossiblity of an absolute ground. It does not follow, as they argue, from the fact that we cannot obtain an absolute foundation, that we are left completely bereft of bearings. Perhaps the requirement of an absolute was the first error itself. It seems to me that a third path between the absolutism of traditionalism on the one hand, and radical perspectivism on the other remains open, namely, something along the lines of a modified or "soft" foundationalism, such as Habermas (following Strawson) is suggesting.

Thus, to return to the question of justifying my belief in autonomy as a norm: I am relatively satisfied that it has been shown in several research traditions within developmental psychology — notably, the psychoanalytic and the Piagetian — that autonomy is a potential of human development as such, though this fact has only been explicitly recognized in the West. It will be objected no doubt that I am committing the naturalistic fallacy by attempting to draw normative conclusions from the findings of empirical science. I would reply that the charge of the naturalistic fallacy itself presupposes the problematic of the old absolutist foundationalism, which assumes all circularity can be eliminated from foundational problems and requires a strict separation between the level of fact and the level of justification. The modified foundationalism to which I referred realizes that there can be no strict separation between founded and founding science, and that, in the human sciences, facts and values are necessarily interwoven. The developmental scheme which has autonomy as its *telos* is at the same time empirical and normative. Finally, I do not find the charge that rational autonomy only emerged as a value within the particular tradition of the West a damning criticism. It is possible to maintain, with Piaget, that, for a variety of contingent historical reasons, this potentially universal value was first recognized in the West, and that

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the tradition of the West does therefore retain a somewhat priveliged status. After all, everything has to happen somewhere.

Let me turn from these theoretical questions to more concrete social, cultural and political considerations. I recognize and acknowledge the seriousness of the problems that have led certain radicals to reconsider the question of religion and even to advocate some sort of a return to it as a solution to the civilizational malaise of our time. We are familiar with the whole gamut of problems that can be loosely subsumed under "the disenchantment of the world": most notably, the destruction of any transcendent meaning and legitimation for our social existence by the spread of secular rationalism, and the dissolution of the more organic and affective ties of pre-capitalist community by the "atomizing forces of civil society." There can be no denying that, along with the pressing questions of peace, ecology and social justice, these are problems that any radical thinking must place at the top of its agenda.

What concerns me, however, is the temptation to formulate regressive solutions to these problems. We know from psychoanalysis that when the anxiety caused by a particular problem is too overwhelming for an individual to bear he will often seek a regressive solution to the problem rather than solving it by advancing to a higher level of integration; he will try to find safety in an earlier position. I am afraid the anxiety produced by the utter enormity and extreme gravity of the problems with which we are confronted often causes us to seek refuge in such regressive solutions. I would argue, in short, that the return to religion represents a failure of nerve. The real challenge is to arrive at a solution to the problems created by the "disenchantment of the world" without returning to an earlier position. One such strategy might be to attempt to demythologize the sublimated utopian content of religion and to try to rethink it in secular terms à la Bloch.

This is not to say that a post-religious, post-traditional world could, under any circumstances, provide the sort of integration, security and consolation of a religious one. Nor should we expect it to. Given the anxieties of our own time, we often tend to idealize the virtues of the past and lose sight of the achievements of our own age. Thus the supposed solidarity and certainty of traditional society can begin to look good compared to the atomization and uncertainty of contemporary life. I do not want to appear as a proponent of alienation, a charge that has been levelled against me for attempting to defend certain fundamentals of the modern *ethos*. However, I do want to point out, that, while traditional society admittedly provided certain satisfactions that the modern world does not, it was, as Marx put it, a "satisfaction from a limited standpoint." And I still want to maintain that the emancipation from those traditionalist constraints that occurred with the advent of modernity marked a tremendous advance in the potential for human dignity and creativity, despite the negative consequences that also followed from that event. Again, the really tough job is to develop a solution which preserves the achievements of modernity while attenuating the destructive consequences of cultural and economic modernization.

There is a larger point I want to make. I am willing to grant that, in a generally dehumanized world, organized religion can provide one of remaining refuges of humanism and often plays a responsible role in the debased arena of contemporary politics. Nevertheless, I want to maintain that, measured in terms of human dignity, we are better off without it. Submission to the Father remains submission, however benign, enlightened and progressive the Father may be. And it is this fact of submission that I take as the condition *sine qua non* of religion, a fact which brings it into unavoidable conflict with the modern values of autonomy and maturity. To be sure,

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the satisfactions of autonomy and maturity, in one respect, can never be as satisfying as those provided by a religious worldview. Even the most imaginative solution to the crisis of modernity cannot eliminate an element of ultimate uncertainty and disconsolation which is an inevitable consequence of the decentering and secularization of consciousness. However, I would argue that, in another respect, the deeper satisfaction of living without the props of religion and dogmatic authority can outweigh the loss of religious consolation and perhaps engender a more completely human form of the good life.

It is sometimes argued that the desideratum I am seeking — a solution to the problems engendered by "the disenchantment of the world" that does not violate the principles of secular rationalism — is a contradiction in terms. It is maintained that rationalism is necessarily inadequate to the problem, and only something with the emotional power of religion can provide the affective glue, as it were, to put a fragmented world back together. This argument is often put forward in a, if not cynical, at least utilitarian way. Its proponents have not suddenly become reconvinced of the "truth-value" of religion. They only believe that, if a general revival of religion were possible, functionally it would solve the problems of our time. I am reminded of something Hegel says here, namely, that one cannot choose to be a traditionalist; once the force of tradition has lost its immediacy and naivete, and become a matter of reflective volition, it has, in a very real sense, ceased to be tradition. Similarly for religion. Disregarding the question of the desirability of this approach, I am afraid the self-conscious revival of religion will lack the very affective depth which its proponents are seeking to reintegrate a fragmented world. (I am leaving aside the question of Third World Societies where religion has, to a large extent, remained a living force. But even here it is difficult to find a "pure culture" where secular modernization has not made large inroads.) The compulsiveness with which born-again individuals of various persuasions must celebrate their new found religion always strikes me as evidence for the tenuousness of the solution.

Be that as it may, it might ultimately prove to be the case that secular rationalism is indeed inadequate to the civilizational crisis of our time. I cannot deny this possibility. We may be forced to agree with Plato and Freud that reason can at best only be the property of a small elite and that myth will always be necessary for the consolation of the masses. This would mean that a considerable core of dogmatic authority would be acknowledged as the uneliminable basis of social integration, that is, it would mean a fundamental abrogation of the Western emancipatory project of creating a community of *selbständige* individuals as I understand it. At this time, I am unwilling to make this concession for two reasons.

First, I believe that the conclusion — which is almost taken as self-evident in certain circles, that the project of Enlightenment has failed — or worse that it was misconceived to begin with — is premature and facile. This conclusion is usually based on the mistaken identification of instrumental reason with reason as such, an identification which ignores a whole other dimension of occidental rationalism, i.e., practical reason. At this point I become very much a Marxist and argue that the problem is not with reason as such, but with the hypostatization of instrumental reason into the only form of rationality, and that this process is fueled primarily by the expansion of the market. The goal, then, is not to discard reason altogether, but to reclaim a legitimate sphere for practical discourse.

Secondly, I believe that the abandonment of rationalism and the turn to religion for political solutions is *extremely dangerous*. While I am tempted to assert that the Ayatolah, Gush Emunim and Jerry Falwell are the "truth" of such a move, I shall restrain myself.

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I would argue, however, that once rationalism is abandoned, one loses all the sedimented safeguards against these types of developments and therefore leaves the door open to fanaticism.

At the same time, I have no difficulty in supporting Solidarity or the liberation theologians, in their political struggles, because of their involvement with religion. In fact, I have been appalled on the occasions when I have heard orthodox Marxists dismiss Solidarity *in toto* because of its relationship with the Catholic Church. This is an easy way for these Marxists to avoid the fact that they cannot comprehend the most authentic and vital workers' movement to appear in decades with the categories of their wornout theory. With respect to the liberation theologians, I have more trouble with the Leninism of some of them than with their religion. While religion is at least ambiguous in that it contains humanistic elements within a basically authoritarian framework, we already know that Leninism is an unequivocally anti-humanist phenomenon. The point is that neither Solidarity nor liberation theology is seeking to replace politics with religion or suggesting that the problems of modernity can be solved by the resurrection of a religious worldview. Instead, they are attempting to draw on the humanistic reservoir in traditional religion to combat politically the conditions in the Soviet Bloc and Latin America. In this they deserve our *critical* support. We should, however, have no illusions about religion providing the solutions to the civilizational crisis of our time.

Kurt H. Wolff: What can we responsibly mean by religion? The question has plagued and puzzled many but is especially urgent today when all that has been done in the name or for the sake of religion, most of which can hardly be news, is brought home to ever more people so much more quickly and so much more concretely than before. What, if any, of all this that goes by the name of religion is really religion? How much of it only uses religious feelings or beliefs or fears for nonreligious ends, money and power above all?

Here is one plagued and puzzled person's attempt at an answer. In this age of totalitarianism, genocides past and absolute genocide, along with the destruction of our planet, which is a more threatening possibility than ever before, religion may appear as the mood embraced by the individual, the attempt to come to terms with the question: What can I truly believe about my fate?

Obviously, one who has the answer to this question or is not bothered by it will not ask it. Even such a person, however, may sometimes be overcome by doubt and try to draw reassurance from religion or another tradition — political, philosophical, artistic, literary. But what if this does not succeed, no more than any repeated effort to glean solace or clarity or insight from tradition? It is then that the possibility may arise of turning to religion in order to ask what one can truly know or believe about one's fate.

"Invent" comes from *in-venire*, to come upon, and to recall this is to get hold of a thread connecting our time, this, until a moment ago, discontinuous time, with a past time — to have come upon the past, which is not mine alone but ours. Thus, religion is the invention of the search for invention on the occasion of that question; it is that which has come upon the search, the search for the path that comes upon whatever it may be that allows us to come to terms with this question: What can I truly believe about my fate?

Yet "to come to terms with" is a phrase that anticipates what we do not know. It might be our being in a position to answer what prior to the search we could not answer, but it might also be that in the search we change to such an extent that the question which

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initiated the search disappears. Or at least we could reach a point where the original question no longer haunts us, in which case we might not become what we couldn't forsee but would have taken a chance of finding by our search.

Of a search of this kind — which I call "surrender" or "total experience" — we must now ask how unconditional it can be — before it becomes disintegration. To what extent can we hold in abeyance our tradition, our received notions, even though they have not enabled us to answer our initial question but on the contrary forced us to confront it? How can I advocate such a search on the ground of broken-down tradition? Does it now not look as if we must avoid it like insanity, while before it seemed to beckon like sanation? How can we resolve this paradox of our historical situation, how stand and overcome this dilemma?

I know no answer but faith in the possibility of such a search, of surrender — which has the awesome support of the thought that at this point in our history it is what articulates itself as that which is common to humankind. The possibility of surrender entails my openness to it, for otherwise I am less true to myself and thus to humanity than I know I ought to and can be.

In this phase of our history, religion is invented as the mood embraced in trying to come to terms with the question of my-humankind's fate, an act we must engage in if we would know. We must invent: we know that we must come upon, but we do not know what.

The preceding draws on my book *Surrender and Catch* (1976). On the surface, it may seem far removed from the concerns of the organizers of this symposium. But only seem, for it might be considered as a point of departure for addressing the questions they raise. These questions are directed to religion as an institution rather than as an approach to the world or a way of "being in the world." As such, to comment on the last question presented in the outline of the symposium (namely: "Can it be said that religion contains, either by nature or in certain of its contemporary forms, a potential for human emancipation?"), if the preceding interpretation of its contemporary meaning is anywhere near true, religion does contain such a potential. But I know of no institutional forms which do, for those which indeed work for emancipation are not purely religious but also political; nor do I know how it could be otherwise, given a society in which religion needs translation into moral or political action to have an emancipatory effect. In my view, religion, as an approach to the world, is confirmatory, whether individual or communal. And in the present phase of human history more clearly than at any other time (in which we don't live, anyway) confirmation is acquiescence, which is the opposite of what our age truly requires: outrage, critique, and above all critical *thought*.

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Notes and Commentary:

SECURITY: AGAINST WHAT? FOR WHAT? WITH WHAT?*

by André Gorz

I.

Security police, state security services, security measures, security politics...a dreadful semantic chain. Everything stubbornly conservative, repressive, antithetical to freedom is expressed in the concept of security. The meaning always implies security for an established order against whatever seems to threaten, disturb or endanger it from without or from within. One can secure, reassure, insure or protect. Movements, associations and networks within which a part of the population unites spontaneously can be channeled, controlled or combatted. Peace, order and security are implied. Negativity is to be negated in the name of the "actually existing." The striving for security is in fact opposed to the striving of all living beings toward self development. Life as well as freedom needs and creates uncertainty, indeterminacy, insecurity in its development. Security presupposes predetermination.

I know that the question here is the politics of security, thus of defense. But for just this reason it seems more important to cast light first on the limited nature of the concept of security. It is significant already that the protection of the ecological, economic and technical presuppositions of the development of life are not contained in the concept of security. On the contrary! Immense projects that destroy agricultural land, forests, rivers, etc., are protected by the police and the administration, projects which limit the capacity of the population to maintain itself, making its life and survival dependent on imports, long-distance transports and fragile capital investments while violently destroying the fabric of the social and communal relations. Only in countries like China, Sweden and Switzerland is it taken for granted that a politics of security presupposes fundamental and prioritary measures and equipment which would permit the population to maintain itself alive after the breakdown (however brought on) of the systems of energy and transportation as well as of the megatechnologies. The politics of security usually has little to do with the security of the population. This has nothing to do with its purpose.

In all nation-states the very question, against what, or whom, should a politics of security be directed is considered as a threat to the state. Part of the politics of security is to fight against that which is immanent in its very nature. The institutions responsible for security are especially to be protected against disruptive influences and critique. The question whether the military security apparatus is not essentially unfit to defend civil rights and freedoms is as old as the nation-state. Must the citizens be ready not only to give their lives but also their freedom to preserve the nation and its independence? Or, can freedom also be assured in freedom?

The answer will depend on 1) the nature of the defense apparatus, and 2) the readiness of the population. These are themselves determined by the relation between state, army and citizens. In all events, it cannot be assumed that a free social order will

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automatically strengthen the free will of each individual to defend that order. The willingness of each individual to defend oneself is in itself an act of freedom, but it does not presuppose in the least the existence of rights of freedom. Its presupposition is rather a feeling of belonging to the society which is to be defended. The strength of this feeling of belonging has nothing to do with democracy. It can be particularly strong in societies which (e.g., Afghanistan) are split into competing fanatical religious sects and peoples, or (as in Switzerland) are marked by a narrow-minded localism. That the members of such fanatic and repressive communities are particularly ready to defend the conditions of their own unfreedom is a paradox which all the colonial powers encountered without being able to understand it. Its complement is the paradox that the members of bourgeois societies are generally quite reticent to freely defend their rights to freedom militarily. Both paradoxes point to the fact that willingness to defend one's nation and a positive relation to the military are mainly determined by national and/or religious feelings of identification, and that political factors are important only insofar as they strengthen or weaken this feeling of identity. But when there is no self-understanding in the people that their national community is threatened from without, then every politics of security runs into difficulty if it does not contain a fundamental answer to the question: who are we? what is worth defending?

The answer to these questions remains unclear in all discussions of security policies. The necessity, in fact the very possibility of a military defense, lacks the self-evidence that it previously had. It was self-evident when the goals were to use military means against the enemy to prevent attacks against 1) the territory which is felt to be the "homeland" (*Heimat*); 2) the social order recognized by the population; 3) the population which recognizes itself in its nation state.

Yet, now, on all three levels, there are limitations and threats that are not of a military nature, not the product of enemy powers, and not to be defended against by a security policy — in fact, the latter may well be strengthening these threats.

1) The relation to the material "homeland" is profoundly undermined by industry, expansion of the cities into rural regions, pollution and land speculation. Insofar as the relation nonetheless exists, one tends to feel one's own nation-state, one's "own" electricity and chemical works, banks and airlines, as more immediately threatening than the military forces of the enemy.

2) The power to control the population and the economic institutions which produce wealth is much less immediately threatened by the potential enemy than it is through the economic competition of allied or homeless multinationals.

3) The population itself is brought more immediately into a life-threatening situation by the military security preparations of its own state and allies than through the power of the opponent. This is especially true for countries which possess atomic weapons or store them on their territory. Atomic weapons are in their very essence totalitarian. Their validity as means of deterrence demands that they be subordinated to the unlimited and immediate disposition of a single person (e.g., the head of state). This means that the will of the population to defend itself is unimportant; the possibility of a freely chosen defense is ruled out. The state protects the population without its help against massive enemy breakthroughs. This unsanctioned authority of the state gives it a total power over the fate of the people: the people become hostage to the state. The state can assert itself externally without the people and can decide questions of vital importance. The population is dispossessed not only of its country but also of the freedom to decide the sense and value of its life.

There thus seems to be a clear connection between the antitechnocratic content of

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the ecology and alternative movement and the opposition to atomic arms in the peace movement. Both are fighting against the tendency of state power to unrestrictedly dominate over its citizens.

This apparently clear connection poses uncomfortable political and ethical questions to both the state and the social movements. Whatever the grounds that lead a state to build its external security mainly on atomic deterrence, the pure fact that it no longer needs the cooperation or even the agreement of the population must have long run alienating effects on that population. Defense becomes the affair of the state to the point that the people can be excluded from it. The inhabitants become suspicious that the choice of atomic defense could come from the state's lack of trust in them, of whose loyalty it no longer feels certain, or on whose willingness to defend themselves it would rather not rely. Only a strong affective tie of the inhabitants to the head of state could weaken this mistrust and even fear of the military power over which he disposes. If the people are sharply divided and the holder of the power of decision has been elected only by a third or a quarter of the population (as, among other places, in the United States), or if (as in the case of West Germany) this person has not at all been elected since he rules a foreign country — then the distrust of ones own or the allied states can outweigh the fear of the enemy and the question will continually recur: "But what do *they* really want to defend?"

The greater the now awakened alienation resulting from the uncontrollable power that the state, the greater will be the state's attempt to stiffen its resistence to the people's movement and to set up a praetorian guard to protect itself from the population. (This temptation was from time to time observable in France under the three first presidents of the Vth Republic.) The defense of the state without the cooperation of the people thus makes the state its own end; it contains the danger of a slippage into dictatorship; and it leaves unanswered the question: what is actually to be defended against what danger?

These relations may explain the primacy that the struggle against its own arbitrary state has taken within the peace movement. However, in its essence, the present peace movement is at once similar to the earlier anarchist and pacifist movement and yet different from it. The earlier movement generally saw in the state — its own and foreign ones — the major enemy; it fought against the military in the name of the right of the individual to dispose of him/herself; and it understood itself as an internationalist vanguard which had to act simultaneously in all countries for the dismantling of the state and the military apparatus. The object of the struggle was thus not peace in itself but rather a conception which had both domestic and world political implications. This last aspect is lacking in the present epoch which is characterized by upheavals that dig deeply into all areas of life; it is lacking also in the peace movement. The peace movement treats the West's security or armament politics as an effort which is in itself nonsensical, the attempt to use force to preserve the meaningless world disorder by imposing on it an equally meaningless order that is the enemy of humanity itself. The great powers act as if the fear of the breakdown of the dominant (dis)order were more important to them than the fear of the atomic destruction of an incalculable part of humanity. From this point of view, the peace movement cannot replace the fear of the breakdown of the dominant (dis)order by the projection of a new order. No one can demand it of the movement. Historical development has not gone far enough for this to occur. The peace movement can only replace the fear of the breakdown of the empires with the fear of the apocalyptic (self)destruction of humanity and thus demand the right to survival in its protest against the world powers. In place of the

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earlier anarcho-pacifist struggle against repression by the state and for the right of free disposition over one's self there enters today the anti- or metapolitical demand for the right to dispose of one's own life and to be able to be satisfied with it. The enemy is no longer those who threaten the country, the people the culture or the life-style; the enemy is those — whether belonging to one's own nation or foreigners, allies or opponents — who endanger the very life of humanity itself. To cite Egon Bahr: "There is no national goal for which it is worth putting peace into danger. The self-determination of the nation must be subordinate to the preservation of peace. That is valid also in the case of Poland."[1]

Is peace threatened only from our, or others' insistance on the right to national self-determination? Leaving aside the contradiction in which a peace movement finds itself when it denies to its own state the right of disposition over its people while at the same time admitting the right of foreign states to dispose over foreign peoples[2]: Can peace be built upon the external determination, that is, the armed oppression of other peoples? Will we no longer be threatened once we (i.e., our state) no longer affect the other state in a threatening manner? In this case, what is the threat that we embody for the opponent, and what is the nature of the danger that it presents to us?

II

The danger which Western Europe presents to the Soviet system is not of a military but of a political nature: it is the infectuous or attractive force which democratic relations and the rights of freedom — however incomplete they may be — exert on other peoples. This attractive force is increased by the military presence of the United States in Europe. Thanks to the United States, Western Europe appears to the peoples of the East as a somewhat faded copy and a geopolitical extension of the mythical North American paradise. In the eyes of the peoples of the East, the American presence gives Western Europe a solidity, unity and untouchable nature which — whether we like it or not — it would not have otherwise. It maintains the secret hope that, "in the last resort," the Western alliance will perhaps be able to bring about a transformation of the Soviet system.

As long as Western Europe is apparently democratic, united and allied with the United States, it will be felt by the Soviet apparatus as a threat and will be labeled as aggressive. The goal of Soviet foreign policy results from this situation: Western Europe must at least be made non-dangerous for the Soviet imperium.

At the same time, the danger which hangs over Western Europe is not immediately military in nature. The Soviet system would gain nothing through an atomic destruction or military occupation of Western Europe. On the contrary, it would risk unpredictable dangers. Nonetheless, the *capacity* of the Soviet Union to threaten destruction and occupation is not without danger for Western Europe. For this one-sided capacity has effects in diplomatic and economic relations. The Soviet Union does not even need to enumerate its capacities, nor does it need to express open threats. All of its declarations and its admonishments get their full dimension because of this background of superior strategic position and capacity. The Soviet Union has the ability to intimidate

1. Egon Bahr, *Was wird aus den Deutschen?* (Rowohlt, 1982) p. 23. Bahr does however add at another point that "Only the readiness not to have peace as one's highest goal guarantees peace."

2. Cf., Ursula Schmiederer, "Destabilisierung der Blöcke-Systemkrise Ost und West," in *Links, Zeitung zum Friedenskongress*, 17-20.6. 1982: "The peace movement will not be able to live in the long run with its schizophrenic attitude which believes that it can merely watch the defeat and oppression of the social opposition in the East in order to save deténte. In doing this, however unconsciously, it runs the danger of going against its own self-understanding . . ."

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Western Europe; Western Europe does not have this capacity in relation to the Soviet Union.

It is sufficient to maintain in the peoples of Western Europe the awareness that the United States can only protect them by risking its own existence — something that, of course, no American regime would be ready to do. The strategic parity of the two super-powers had diminished the credibility of the United States' readiness to protect other nations through the threat of the use of its intercontinental weapons. This is why all Allied and American efforts aim at building up a stragegy of deterrence limited to Europe. Such a strategy is supposed to earn its credibility from the fact that it contains a limited risk for the United States.

However, the readiness of the United States to undertake this risk contains, from the viewpoint of Western Europe, the unlimited risk of total destruction. The Soviet Union has done everything possible since 1980 in order to make fully clear to the peoples of Western Europe the nature of this risk. American "protection," say the Soviet declarations, can bring only greater insecurity to Western Europe. Rather than deter an eventual attack, the American weapons stored in Western Europe actually call for such an attack. Indeed, they give the Soviet Union grounds for a preventive first strike.

Western Europe therefore can have security only *with* the Soviet Union, not *against* it. The tighter the bonds to the United States, the greater the risk to which Western Europe opens itself. The better the understanding and economic relations with the Soviet Union, the greater the security and well-being of Western Europe.

With these declarations, the Soviet Union demonstrates its will and its capability to present itself with imposing self-certainty and to give us the feeling that in all events we have more to fear from her than she from us. The ability of this behavior to convince affects also those who deny the military superiority of the Soviet Union over Western Europe. The Soviet regime has succeeded in awakening in a large part of the population the conviction that economic well-being, security and peace in Western Europe depend on the good will of the Soviet Union, and that it is in our own interest to earn and to maintain that good will. Western Europe should therefore uncouple itself from the United States, not store weapons that threaten the Soviet Union, take account of the fact that the Soviet Union controls directly or indirectly the supply of raw materials that are vital necessities; and should not make more difficult for the Soviet Union the delicate situation in Middle and Eastern Europe by actions or declaration. That we "little people" cannot permit ourselves "to anger the big neighbor" is thus turned into an indubitable certitude.

Western Europe has become well aware of its vulnerability and hardly believes any longer that — with or without the Americans' "protection" — it can use pressure to get anything at all from the Soviet Union. On the contrary, Western Europe believes that it is forced to give in to Soviet pressure when it threatens to become too strong. Whatever the real relation of military forces, the populations and in part the regimes of Western Europe behave as if peace in Europe is threatened only by our own and not by the Soviet inflexibility (as if it were only the people of Western Europe, and not the people of the Soviet Union, who had to tremble for their lives in case of conflict). Western Europe is supposed to take into account the borders of the Soviet regime without being allowed to ask the same of it. Western Europe is supposed not to irritate or to wound the Soviet Union through harsh words while not taking umbrage when she does the same or even threatens it with total annihilation.

In a word, Western Europe is spiritually already quite far on the road to finlandisation," i.e., on the road to self-censorship, pliability, self-limitation of its sovereign-

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ty, without having received anything in exchange. In fact, Western Europe has gone so far that it can unashamedly ask itself whether there is indeed anything to object to "finlandisation." Is not Western Europe, as opposed to Finland, so economically culturally and politically strong that it could never fall under the sway of the Soviet Union and its crumbling imperium? Is it not in its interest to build economic exchanges on the bases proposed by the Soviet Union? Are not the desirable fruits of a close cooperation with the Soviet Union the importation of ever greater amounts of necessary raw materials and energy, the full utilization of industrial capacities and the increase of employment through exportation of greater masses of production goods and technology? Will not the building of economic and technological relations also affect the transformation of the Soviet system and society? Is it not more advantageous for Western Europe to develop these trade relations instead of leaving them to the Japanese?

One can consider these questions from different viewpoints. I will limit myself to the economic-technical aspects, while taking into account their social and cultural consequences.

The international division of labor suggested by the Soviet Union may appear at first glance to be without political danger. It would develop reciprocal dependence and be bound up with the maintenance of parliamentary democracy and the independence of trade unions in Western Europe. Only in this manner could the productive capacity of European industry, so important for the Soviet Union, be maintained. Investments and employment would be increased by the trade with the East, thereby contributing to the solidity of the social relations in Western Europe.

But precisely this solidity contains the danger of economic backwardness and social decomposition for Western Europe. All advanced industrial countries are faced with a profound cultural and economic-technological transformation since the end of the 60s. From an economic viewpoint this transformation is conditioned by the unbearably high weight of the "costs of organization" which grow from an ever more complex and diverse economic activity. The coordination, management, education, organization, transfer, storage and processing of information and data, etc. devour far greater masses of social labor time than does the production of goods. The volume of the costs of organization is one of the essential causes of the present economic crisis, and the attempt to reduce these costs is the driving effort behind the present technological transformation.

This transformation is at one and the same time the answer to the growing complexity, and an accelerating force working retroactively to further increase this complexity. Because of it complexity, our industrial system no longer can be centrally managed, directed, mastered; and the technological answer to this impossibility increases the problem with increasing speed. The continually growing technological transformation demands for its development a rapidly increasing measure of decentralization, desyncronization, de-massification, independent decision-making capacity and power, etc. as well as the destruction of technological gigantism (*Grosstechnologien*) or the restructuration of whole branches of industry and the turn to small or middle-size, flexible, highly computerized installations which are in much closer relation to the final users than is the case in the usual forms of mass production.

The tendencies that are driving this radical reorganization are described convincingly by Alvin Toffler as a "third wave." Whether they are compatible with the preservation of a capitalistic market economy based on the accumulation and realization of capital can be left aside. What is certain, however, is that the whole procedure will be able to develop only under the growing pressure of new social forces and values, that

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these forces spring from all classes and strata of the population and will find themselves in conflict with the conservative entrepreneurial groups and with conservative trade unions. The outcome of these conflicts will be influenced by the political relation of forces and the lucidity of governments. The outcome of the collision of the second and third wave is determining for the future, indeed, for the question whether there will be a future.

The previously considered international division of labor, now, would break or totally overwhelm the third wave in Western Europe. It would give a new impulse to precisely the technical gigantism which bears the primary responsibility for the growth of the organizational costs and also to the increasingly untenable ecological burden, the destruction of the social fabric and the lack of possibilities for self-determination. Precisely those cultural developments that are necessary for the third wave, for de-massification and diversification, would be suppressed in favor of a new phase of export-oriented industrialism.

By the same token, it is highly doubtful whether the massive sale of Western technology will bring about positive social and economic developments for the Soviet Union. Technology in itself is not what is lacking either in the Soviet Union or to its allies. What is lacking, rather, are the social and cultural conditions for the creative, flexible and adequate application and further development of technology. Microprocessors, cable television with the possibility of intercommunication, work done away from the immediate site, differentiated small factories which can outproduce large ones because of the use of automation, guidance from a distance and flexibility — these and many other innovations are hardly usable within the Soviet system. As long as the Soviet Union treats telephone books as a state secret, makes the simple connection of a telephone an impossibility, locks photocopy machines and watches them closely — it will be difficult to accept the supposition that the system's decentralization and democratization will be encouraged by new technologies. Technology in itself can make more difficult political-cultural transformation toward increased freedom, but it cannot bring it about as long as the process itself has not already been set in motion. Under present conditions, technology containing decentralizing potential would be encapsulated in favor of applications which make easier the build up of central controls and military power. The unhappy conditions of the Soviet Union and other so-called "socialist" countries of Europe are due to the nature of the system of domination, not to the lack of technology or of credits.

Thus, the positive effect of the Western European industrial system on that of the Soviet Union would be very limited; the negative retro-action of the Soviet industrial system on the social and cultural developments of Western Europe, however, would be significant. The Western European economy would adapt to the goals posited by the Soviet economic plan without being able to have much influence on the latter and without being able to develop an independent economic plan for Western Europe. The previous inability to produce a Western European economic planification would not be remedied by the closer cooperation with the Soviet Union. The greater technological and industrial dependence of the Soviet Union would not exclude the possibility that a still non-unified Western Europe would gradually become subordinated to the interests and to the world-wide strategy of the Soviet imperium. This belief, stemming from a simplified Marxism, that dominant economic power must bring with it political superiority is unjustified; nor is it supported by history. Precisely the case of the Soviet Union demonstrates that an economic system that is capable of little can go together with great military power and superior capacity for world-

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political action. Precisely this particularity of the Soviet system, which can base its international influence not on the export of culture or of goods but only in its military weight and its apparatus of domination, explains the Soviet need for Western economic support without an equivalent contribution from the Soviets. This form of unequal cooperation in which the more capable industrial lands are to be made serviceable to the preservation of an economically counter-productive system of domination does not necessarily demand the violent subordination of Western European nations. It could lead to a modernized, relatively invisible version of the Ottoman or Austro-Hungarian system of domination over all of Europe. The downfall of this imperium would certainly be unavoidable (leaving wholly aside the possibilities of a catastrophic breakdown) — but it could be put off for centuries with the aid of the most modern psychological, psychiatric, and police techniques for control, cooptation or intimidation.

III

The discussion of the pros and cons of an eventual "Finlandisation" leaves the further question open: what is it in Western Europe that is to be defended; and what means are compatible with that end? The very difficulty of giving an immediate answer to the question "for what?" are the lives of Western Europeans to be risked is significant for Western European culture. The singularity of Western Europe, and of every people that belongs to Western Europe, is the lack of unity. As opposed to the civilization common to North and South America and the Soviet Union, with its immense spaces, its gigantism and superhuman character, Western Europe remains a lose texture of small spaces and micro-cultures: a culture of the small (also of the small individual who — as Elias Canetti notes of Franz Kafka — attempts to avoid all attempts at domination and all apparatuses of domination by this smallness) which bore its most beautiful fruits in Italy and its most developed ones in Denmark and Holland.

This original culture, born in Italy and the Netherlands with a debt to Greek democracy, was for five centuries the mask of European wars of plunder and colonial domination. Until the middle of the 20th century, it seemed that colonialism was the foundation of democracy in the metropoles, and as if democracy could not exist without the exploitation of colonies to raise the standard of living of metropolitan populations.

The opposite proved to be the case. The apparatus of domination of the colonial powers and their colonial wars threatened (namely in France) to strangle democracy. The loss of colonies gave new impulse both to the economy and the emancipatory efforts, as if the European nations (i.e., the Netherlands, France, Portugal and Spain) had regained their self-relatedness and self-understanding through their abandonment of the position of world powers. Western Europe became thereby one of the most politically stable and certain regions of the world: a region which by and large — in spite of occasional transgressions — has not had systematic torture, arbitrary police actions, administrative bribery, etc.

At the same time, Western Europe became a loose, fragile, vulnerable and uncertain texture of small to middle-sized national states which, in their small, thickly inhabited half-island extending on the Eurasian continent, can claim no world hegemonic role. A unification and common action of these national states is impossible. There is, of course, a Western European sensibility and culture; but there is not Western European social and political self-awareness. Over against the apparently unified mass of the Soviet imperium and its centrally directed foreign policy stand a dozen nations who are more aware of their differences and their weaknesses than they are of their common force, and who do not feel as equal opponents or partners but as desired prey of

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the Soviet Union.

This feeling of subordination is also expressed by those who on the one hand refer to the qualitative and quantitative weaknesses of the Soviet military forces but on the other hand see in every defensive policy merely the danger of being armed to death by a Soviet Union which constantly feels threatened. Because of the fact that a conflict of the two world-powers could only take place in Europe, many feel that the American presence in Europe is the source of the danger of war, not of security. The suspicion that it would be in the interest of both world-powers to test their strength on the back of a third party to avoid, after its annihilation, their own self-annihilation, is not without grounds.

The attempt to conjure away the danger of annihilation by the appeasement of the "big neighbor" and the separation from the United States may appear logical at first sight. However, in that it apparently conjurs away the one evil it could in fact conjure up both evils: first the loss of freedom, then war and total annihilation. Neither with nor without the tie to the United States can Western Europe avoid the danger of annihilation. Every kind of defense, and also non-defense, implies a total risk. The attempt to avoid it is scarcely less dangerous than the decision to accept the risk and to defend the specifically Western European in its ununified diversity. It slowly becomes clear that this defense is 1) strengthened through association with the United States, but is 2) weakened by an American protection that treats Western Europe as immature and an unequal partner.

1) By association is meant that there exists between Western Europe and the United States a community of values in the political and cultural spheres which neither exists nor can exist with the Soviet Union. The Soviet Union is an imperial despotism based on the oppression of its own people and domination over foreign nations. The countries allied with it do not tolerate self-determination, the rights of freedom, or differences of opinion. In the Soviet Union the oppression of foreign peoples and of the domestic population, the power of the party, police and military apparatuses are fused together; they mutually support each other. In the case of the United States, on the other hand, the oppression of foreign peoples contradicts democracy at home, confronts opposition at home, and weakens the nation's political self-understanding. It is not impossible to appeal successfully to the American people against the American government and power apparatus, and to begin to formulate common goals and actions without the mediation of the state. As opposed to the Soviet Union, the United States is not identical with its system of domination. It is precisely this difference, indeed this contradiction between social and state interest which is to be preserved and defended against chauvinistic or totalitarian pressure from within and from without. The reciprocal association of Western Europe and the United States is in this regard a self-evidence to which the tendency toward neutralism that considers only relations among states does not do justice.

2) Association is not, however, to be confused with dependence. Although the alliance with the United States may strengthen Western European self-understanding, dependence on American protection has a weakening effect on Western European will to defend itself. As long as the security of Western Europe depends on the nuclear deterrence of the Soviet Union by the United States, mistrust and fear will continue to exist in the Western European population. If the United States does not store deterrent weapons in Western Europe, its readiness to risk its existence for Western Europe remains doubtful. But if the United States wants to strengthen the credibility of their means of deterrence by placing these on Western European soil, they will be suspected

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of wanting to defend Western Europe to the death without risking their own existence. If they lower the threshold at which nuclear weapons are to be introduced, they are accused of leaving out of consideration the survival chances of the population. If they set the threshold much higher (as in the Airland Battle Doctrine), they are suspected both of indecisiveness and of having the secret desire not to hinder a war but to fight and win it at Europe's expense. Fear and distrust are maintained by the fact that a European defense policy largely determined by the United States becomes implicated in a world-wide strategy which Europe is not able to control. Instead of feeling protected by the United States, Europe feels subordinate to United States' interests. The suspicion that the United States could use Western Europe as a tool of their world domination is contained in the United States' geographical position and supremacy. No complaining can eliminate this fact.

Western Europe and the Soviet Union thus have a common interest. Both seek to avoid the use of Western Europe for an American war which only the United States could survive intact. But the paths toward achieving this goal are different. The Soviet Union does everything it can in order simply to exclude Western Europe from world politics and to make it useful to its own strategy of world domination. From the Soviet viewpoint, Western European neutrality means its inability for autonomous world-political action.

For Western Europe, on the other hand, it is necessary to break up the bipolarization of world politics in favor of multi-polar relations in order to create room for its autonomous appearance as a subject in world history. To achieve this goal, Europe certainly needs to end American guardianship or tutelage, but not the alliance. It certainly needs the capacity to defend itself independently, and a strategy of deterrence (even if also supported by the United States), but it does not need (at least in the present stage) the total renunciation of its own nuclear weapons. Without these weapons, Western Europe would still be subordinate to the strategy of the two world-powers; it would remain dependent on their reciprocal relations.

The problem that needs to be solved in this: How can Western European defense policy be formulated so that it presents a deterrent but not a threat, a political but not a military force? The political rights and freedom in Western Europe are felt by the Soviet Union as a pressure difficult to bear. It reacts with military "counter-pressure" in order to be able to threaten Europe because of its so-called "aggresive goals," and to be able militarily to intimidate it. The Soviet Union can only cease to feel threatened, and cease to use explicit or inexplicit "counter-threats" if Western Europe would cease exercising its attractive force on Eastern or Middle-Europe. This is why it is necessary for Western Europe to be able to invalidate the "counter-threats" without appearing either docile or threatening.

The deterrent capacity that is necessary for this policy does not in the least need to contain an aggressive potential. It is conceivable that both Western Europe and the Soviet Union possess a number of nuclear weapons limited by a treaty. The Soviet Union could not possibly feel itself threatened by Western European weapons. These weapons would not need either to be land-based nor aimed at Soviet cities but (according to the suggestion of General Pierre Gallois, the theorist of "deterrence of the strong by the weak"), for example, they could be aimed at the submarine base on the otherwise uninhabited coast of the Kola peninsula. According to Gallois, Western Europe should be in a position to answer a selective, limited attack by the Soviet Union that aims to intimidate it by a selective answer — with the result that this response would rule out attempts at intimidation.

The American presence in Western Europe can be structured in an essentially

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defensive manner and, as opposed to the Eastern armies, it can be made unsuitable for the conquest and occupation of foreign territories. Nonetheless, one must expect that the Soviet leadership will of course label it "aggresive." (This is already the case with regard to the Airbattle Doctrine which is supposed to lead to the withdrawal of all land-based American nuclear weapons in favor of "more intelligent" conventional weapons systems.) The belief that Western Europe is only in danger because the Soviet realm feels itself threatened by the American presence will continue to be propagated in all events in order, where possible, to bring about the end of the American presence and the Balkanization of Western Europe.

Security is achievable for Western Europe neither through massive armament nor through unilateral disarmament. The "big neighbor" who maintains a gigantic security apparatus against its own people and the peoples allied with it, and who (to put it mildly) cannot overcome the inadequacies of its own system, cannot possibly guarantee from outside the security lacking domestically. Inversely, and for the same reasons, it is impossible to live together with it in ultimate reconciliation and security. Security can only be achieved when it needs its own army as little to maintain its own system as Western Europe does its, and when it can thus build down that army.

For these reasons insecurity will remain for a long time the fate of Western Europe. This would not be unbearable if the Western European peoples knew how to create the decisiveness that will struggle with violent and with non-violent means against any attempt to subordinate them; if they knew never to accept the normalization of a regime that is forced upon them; and if they knew how to create self-confidence and self-certainty. The will to defense, and the capacity for civil and military self-organization that is its foundation, cannot be replaced by anything else. No deterrence is possible without them. Their absence — because of the too technocratic conception of defense that bases everything on the abilities of the weapons systems — testifies to the fact that it is not only in the East that the state apparatus and the party oligarchs mistrust their own people and seek to preserve their empty and unimaginative monopoly on power. Western Europeans are their own worst enemies.

THE WELFARE STATE AND THE FUTURE OF SOCIALISM: AN INTERVIEW WITH CLAUS OFFE*

by John Keane and David Held

QUESTION: *We would like to begin this discussion of the welfare state and the future of socialism by asking you about several substantive aspects of your work on the limitations of the welfare state. To begin with, why do you often say that late capitalist systems can neither live with nor without the welfare state? Do you consider this to be their fundamental contradiction?*

*The following is part of a considerably longer interview conducted by David Held and John Keane in London and Wassenaar during November and December 1982. The full text will appear in Claus Offe, *Contradictions of the Welfare State* (Hutchinson, London: M.I.T. Press, Boston, 1984).

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OFFE: A short-hand defintion of a contradiciton is that it is a condition in which certain indispensable elements of a social structure cannot be integrated because they are at odds with each other. So to speak, the social structure paralyzes itself because the elements necessary for its survival at the same time render it impossible. In applying this concept of contradiction to the welfare state, I was greatly impressed by Karl Polanyi's reformulation of the classical Marxist interpretation of the wage-labor process. As is well known, Polanyi argues that, although wage-labor is treated as if it were a commodity, it is in fact not a commodity. This is not only because labor cannot be separated from its owner. Unlike all other commodities — whose volume, quality, time and place of appearance are determined by criteria of market rationality — wage-labor is not predominantly determined in these respects by the anticipation of its marketability. In his studies of the early systems of welfare and social policy, Polanyi points out that a society based on the 'fictitious' commodity form of labor power necessarily depends upon non-commodified support systems. These systems function to preserve and enhance labor power whenever it is not traded in labor "markets." I consider this argument decisive. Contrary to the view later associated with the writings of T.H. Marshall, Polanyi suggests that 'welfare' is not a late development within capitalist societies, something that somehow comes into being for philanthropic reasons after the time of the absolute exploitation of labor power. Rather, 'welfare' institutions are a precondition of the commodification of labor power. In my view, this relationship between 'welfare' and capitalism is contradictory: under modern capitalist conditions, a supportive framework of non-commodified institutions is necessary for an economic system that utilizes labor power as if it were a commodity. This contradiction is deepened by the state monopoly of social policy provision. Of course, in the early phase of capitalist society, social policies were provided through traditional forms of organizations, including guilds, families, communities and churches. However, with the disaggregration and mobilization of whole populations, these traditional organizations are themselves undermined and therefore fail to function to the extent that is 'functionally required' — to use a very dangerous phrase — for the development of capitalism. Because of this disorganizing development, non-commodified support systems are more and more politicized, that is, transferred from private and religious and philanthropic organizations to the state apparatus. This politicization of the provision of welfare was greatly accelerated by three interrelated political developments during the first half of the 20th century: the parliamentarization of government; the universal extension of the franchise; and the formal recognition of the interests and veto powers of trade unions. In consequence of these various developments, state institutions which assign legal entitlements to citizens become relatively 'rigid' or even irreversible. Unconstrained by a definite index or 'stop rule' that would ensure that they do not develop beyond the extent functionally required for the absorption of the risks and uncertainties connected with wage-labor, decommodified state institutions tend to develop an independent life of their own. On this point, I think that much can be learned from the neo-conservative argument that the welfare state is becoming an intolerable burden on the capitalist economy.

QUESTION: *In summary form, then, your thesis is that the welfare state strategy of maintaining the commodity form leads to the growth of policies and institutions exempt from the commodity form. This seems clear enough. But why do you consider such organizations as schools, housing authorities, and hospitals as 'decommodified'? And why do you sometimes consider these organizations as the most* advanced *forms of erosion of the commodification process? Doesn't your theory of decommodification also imply the need for maintaining and extending decommodified state activities? And,*

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thereby, does it not underestimate the fact that many state-provided 'use-values' are distorted by their orientation to capitalist accumulation and, above all, by their bureaucratic *mode of production and distribution?*

OFFE: I see that these formulations are problematic, because they tend to create the impression that non-market forms of life are harbingers of socialism. Let me try to explain more precisely what I mean. I speak of certain organizations as decommodified because their provision of use-values is no longer guided by the form of rationality appropriate to market behavior. If we consider the "products" of the labor of teachers within schools, for instance, it is evident that it is not sold on the market and that, moreover, its quantity, quality, timing and geographic distribution are not directly determined by market criteria. This non-market rationality is also crystallized in many other categories of service labor. In my view, the continuous growth of decommodified organizations such a schools and hospitals consequently tends to weaken and paralyze market rationality. This hiatus between the rationality of commodity markets and activity within decommodified organizations is not only an embarrassing problem for the academic disciplines of public administration and organization theory. It also constitutes a political opportunity for the Left. Areas of social life that have been decommodified by welfare state interventions can be developed, through political struggle, into relatively autonomous subsystems of life oriented to the production and distribution of use-values.

QUESTIONS: *The discrepancy in the criteria of rationality between commodified and decommodified systems may be viewed as a political opportunity for the Left, but do you not still underestimate the problem of bureaucratic domination, a problem powerfully raised by Max Weber and one that has increasingly plagued the socialist tradition in the 20th century?*

OFFE: Weber rightly feared a totally bureaucratized, state-dominated society, and in my view his critique of the socialism of the Second International as a one-sided *extension* of bureaucratic domination was largely correct. In opposition to classical liberalism, Weber convincingly argued that the expansion of state bureaucratization and the capitalist form of production are parallel and coextensive, and not necessarily opposed processes. Nevertheless, Weber assumed that, under capitalist conditions, the relationship between the development of market forces and bureaucratic state control could be harmonized. He tended to believe that an uneasy coexistence between these two modes of rationality could be secured by 'responsible' individual leaders at the top of state bureaucracies and capitalist enterprises. The question today, however, is whether private property and market relations continue to constitute a safeguard against bureaucratic domination. It must also be asked whether plebiscitory mass democracy is indeed a check on bureaucratization, as Weber expected it would be. Finally, consideration must be given to whether bureaucratic modes of regulation are as uniquely efficient and effective as Weber assumed. In considering these three areas of doubt, I think that *étatiste* and bureaucratic-centralized forms of social regulation are as vulnerable to criticism in the West as they are — for somewhat different and more obvious reasons — in Eastern European, state socialist regimes.

QUESTION: *We can return to this question of the possibility of democratic socialism later. For the moment, we would like to ask you more about the contradiction that you see between commodified markets and decommodified welfare state policies. It seems to us that your thesis about the rapid growth of non-market forms of rationality rests upon some unexpressed assumptions about the self-paralyzing tendencies of the capitalist economy. In your view, why is it that capitalist processes of commodification constantly tend to paralyze themselves?*

OFFE: I am not myself an economist, and I have only a marginal understanding of

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technical economic arguments concerning such matters as capital coefficients and falling rates of profit. Bearing that in mind, I would say that there are two essential aspects of the present deep recession of the capitalist world economy. The first of these, which we have already discussed, has to do with the expansion of the decommodifying policies of the Keynesian welfare state. Disincentives to invest and work are unintended side effects of these policies, which clearly block the market mechanism to such an extent that the adaptation-potential of capitalism is adversely affected. The present economic recession may therefore be seen in part as caused by state interferences with the purgative effects generated by the old business cycles of the capitalist economy. The phenomenon of demand saturation constitutes a second reason why we should not assume that investment outlets for private capital — and therefore full employment and economic growth — will easily be recreated in the near future. Within the highly industrialized economies, investment outlets have been considerably reduced by the exhaustion of demand for certain post-war boom commodities, such as automobiles and refrigerators. In my view, whatever growth potential there is in the near future will likely be created through forms of investment and consumption that are administratively imposed on the population — through industries such as defense, energy, transportation and communications. These are the industries that are most likely to flourish and to catalyze any new cycle of capital-intensive accumulation. what is interesting about these industries and their products is that they are developed without direct reference to markets or consumer demands. These industries and forms of consumption are enforced through *political* decisions; questions concerning capital investment and the production and consumption of plutonium reactors, nuclear weapons and transport systems become central within the prevailing political discourse. Given their often negative environmental, military and social conseqences, these forms of administratively created investment and enforced consumption meet with enormous resistance from citizens and consumers in our societies. I think that this resistance may signal the emergence of a new politics of production during the 1980s — that is, the rise of forms of struggle that effectively block the opening up of new outlets for private capitalist investment.

QUESTION: *In your discussions of the welfare state the concept of legitimacy is sometimes very prominent. You suggest, especially in your early writings, that the cohension of late capitalist societies depends upon shared norms and values, that is, upon a pattern of social integration which generates mass loyalty to the political system. You suppose that, without mass loyalty, a political system may plunge into crisis. There are a number of objections to such a view. First, the evidence provided by industrial and political sociology (for Britain at least) does not support the idea of a widespread system of shared norms and values. Dominant ideologies appear more important for maintaining the cohesion of dominant classes than they are for organizing the dominated. Second, the absence of widespread legitimacy suggests that late capitalist societies do not depend upon legitimacy for their 'cohesion' or stability. How would you assess a view which argued in the following way: political and social order is the outcome of a complex web of interdependencies between political, economic and social institutions and activities which divide power centers and which create multiple pressures to comply — whatever the values of individuals and groups. Political and social stability is related to the splits between, and the intersection of, power centers, and to the resultant 'decentering' or fragmentation of political and economic life, the atomization of culture, and the privatization of people's experience of their social and political worlds. These fragmentation processes constitute crucial barriers to the mobilization of opposition movements and to the formulation of coherent alternatives to existing political and social arrangements?*

OFFE: Some people have criticized my earlier conceptions of legitimacy for their

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overly rationalistic and implicitly Parsonian bias. I think these critics are largely correct and, in response to their criticisms, I have come to consider the questions of legitimacy and normative integration in a different way. To begin with, the concept of legitimacy has a deeply ambiguous meaning within most writings on the social integration of liberal democracy. From a sociological or social-psychological perspective, legitimacy means the prevalence of attitudes of trust in the empirical political system. From a philosophical perspective, on the other hand, the concept of legitimacy is more applicable to cases in which regime norms become problematic and are questioned: the legitimacy of a regime or government depends upon the justifiability of its institutional arrangements and political outcomes. I think that these competing meanings of the concept of legitimacy can be reconciled by understanding them, at the analytic level at least, as addressed to the following sequence of problems. First of all, assume conditions in which there is an unproblematic consensus about a regime in power that confirms itself, as Marcuse put it, by delivering the goods. Under these conditions, questions pertaining to legitimacy in both senses are displaced or pushed to one side by the very fact that the society 'works'. Then comes a second stage of development, in which empirical attitudes of trust and satisfaction are disturbed by the system's failure to function. This develops a sense that society does not work according to its own established standards, say, of continuous economic gowth, full employment, and open and competitive party government. If even more basic questions are raised, then a third level of legitimation problem appears. Philosophical arguments break out concerning the validity of the normative foundations of liberal democratic arrangements. Certain fundamental questions are provoked: Do we really need trade unions? What is the role of the mass communications media? Is majority rule justifiable? Must the constitution be altered? Should democracy be understood as synonymous with parliamentary democracy? In my view, late capitalist systems have entered into this third stage of legitimacy problems. As the political crisis develops along with the economic crisis, popular satisfaction with a system that formerly 'delivered the goods' has turned into dissatisfaction; empirical attitudes of dissent emerge; and the philosophical questioning of the whole relationship between politics and society commences. There is a broadening of the parameters of license — to employ a term developed in a very interesting study of political integration in Britain by Alan Marsh. In other words, the range of deviation from what is considered by the political culture as positive and normatively binding increases. What many people considered objectionable twenty years ago becomes less objectionable. There has been a 'liberalization' of the parameters of license in regard to such unorthodox modes of political action as teachers' strikes, factory occupations and citizens' disruption of state ceremonial events. This development is symptomatic of a growing uncertainty about the normative foundations of liberal democratic political systems. It is related to the weakening of certain traditional mechanisms of transmitting cultural values, such as the family. As Habermas has pointed out, this uncertainty is also linked with the fact that the moral infrastructure of society becomes contingent to the extent that it is drawn into the institutional realm of the state. For instance, primary and secondary socialization and education is no longer to any extent the class-specific and 'private' business of the family; these functions are instead delegated to state institutions, and this in turn produces changes both in the form and the content of cultural reproduction. The parameters of license or level of contingency within the prevailing political culture are expanded. State intervention weakens the processes of privatization and fragmentation. The existing repertoire of values and practices ceases to be 'natural' — it is now subject to politi-

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cal criticism and determination. In sum, I have doubts about your thesis that privatization and fragmentation are functional substitutes for normative control. Within such spheres as education, the arts and mass communications, a *de*privatization of moral, cognitive and cultural standards is taking place.

QUESTION: *Perhaps more than anyone else recently, Michel Foucault has highlighted the degree to which the modern state deploys not just forces of coercion like the military, but also forms of disciplinary power, or what he calls a 'subtle, calculated technology of subjection'. His account of this disciplinary power explores the way various agencies (asylums, hospitals, penitentiaries) help sustain 'law and order' and forms of 'governability.' You also analyze this process of normalization; you describe it as one in which the state enters more closely into physical contact with individuals' bodies and psyches. What is it about welfare state societies that produce for their own 'security' such dangerous means of surveillance?*

OFFE: At a very abstract level, and drawing upon analogies from biology and cultural anthropology, I would argue that systems tend to become more vulnerable as they grow more complex. One thing that is striking is that the most primitive systems are also the least vulnerable systems. Whereas, for instance, the most primitive Indian cultures survived in the Americas, advanced Indian civilizations such as that of the Incas were very easily conquered and finally destroyed. On this basis, I would say that modern, complex societies are more sensitive to deviation and therefore depend on a very narrow definition of normality; the very complexity of these societies forces them to control, monitor and prevent psychic and physical disorders and 'deviant' modes of behavior. This type of argument can be complemented with a further consideration, namely, that industrial, high technology, urbanized and densely populated societies such as our own generate various forms of mental, physical and ecological disorders that must be contained or remedied before they become threats to the whole social system. As Foucault, Melucci and others have observed, activities relating to eating, sexuality, health and disease cease to be governed by traditional cultural norms and are more and more taught and controlled by the state. There are many examples of this relationship between complexity, vulnerability, 'deviance' and increasing welfare state control. Concerning nutrition, I vividly remember a program in New York City that attempted to teach poor people about the superior nutritional value of beans and eggs — something that would never have been a problem for past generations — but which becomes a problem in the uprooted world of ghetto life. Under modern capitalist conditions, to take a second example, production also becomes highly sensitive to the costly mistakes and failures associated with repetitive and demanding blue-collar and white-collar work. Here again it is evident that there is a genetic relationship between complexity and vulnerability and the generation of 'deviant' behavior. The forms of labor and machinery are both health-destroying and highly sensitive to the resulting 'deviant' behavior associated with poor health. It therefore becomes imperative for those who manage the system of production to see to it that people have enough sleep or physical exercise. Nutritional and physical education schemes are complemented by a whole range of programs of behavior control — from campaigns against smoking and drinking to sex and drivers' education. These programmes evidence a growing surveillance of forms of activity that fifty years ago were still considered as private matters and therefore of no interest to the state or employers.

QUESTION: *In contrast to Foucault, doesn't your account of the growth of these mechanisms of surveillance downplay the importance of professionalized forms of power and knowledge in* defining *'deviance' and disability?*

OFFE: Foucault does indeed emphasize the pre-political power aspects of the pro-

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fessions. I am also interested in this, especially in connection with the growth of service labor. Consider the role of the medical profession within modern health systems. The power of this profession partly derives from the fact that the normal balance of supply and demand with competitive markets does not prevail. Within modern health systems, clients by definition do not know exactly what they demand because the supply side itself defines the treatment required by clients. Market relations of demand and supply are also absent in the sense that customers do not as a rule have to pay individually for what they actually receive. If they are part of a collective insurance scheme, rational individual consumers therefore want to have as much as possible because they have already paid and, in any case, they don't really know what they need and whether doctors have over-treated them. This endows doctors with an enormous economic power which is virtually beyond control. This monopoly position of the medical profession tends to be reinforced, as Ivan Illich among others has argued, by its destruction of the competence of clients. Popular knowledge about health is indeed destroyed by the professionalization and medicalization of health; clients are made more ignorant about life and death. It is clear from these well-known observations that the medical profession, as well as other health-related and custodial professions, enjoy an enormous economic power position and cognitive advantage over their clients.

QUESTION: *May we ask you to speculate briefly about the possible social or political alternatives to this regulation of populations by welfare state institutions and professions? Might a combination of professionalism and self-help, such as it is practiced in sectors of the informal economy or the feminist movement, be viable or desirable? Or does your thesis about the genetic relationship between complexity, vulnerability and deviant behavior imply the irreversibility of mechanisms of surveillance and administration of life?*

OFFE: Let me respond with reference to the widely-discussed psychiatric reform movement developed by Basaglia and others in Italy. This model of de-institutionalization and de-professionalization is based on the assumption that civil society and its infrastructure of families and communities is capable of absorbing a certain range of 'deviance'. 'Giving the mentally handicapped back to the community' means reabsorbing the handicapped to allow them to live meaningfully, without exploitation and discrimiantion. This proposal is questionable. The sheer complexity of communities may make them intolerant of deviance; what is more, communities have lost the type of popular knowledge necessary for dealing competently with people who have some mental defect. I think this is evident, for instance, when school children are confronted with mentally handicapped people — these children tend to be frightened, precisely because they and their parents are regularly separated from mental institutions and even mild forms of mental deficiency. The question is therefore whether the proposals of Basaglia are in fact utopian because the structural and cultural preconditions for decarceration are simply absent. The very frustrated and disillusioned reports arising out of the Italian legal reforms concerning the mentally handicapped seem to reinforce this conclusion. The point is that certain developments cannot be undone. As soon as systems such as families, cities or labor markets are modernized, they become vulnerable and consequently cease to contain 'space' for deviants. It therefore appears that the whole social system would have to be transformed in order to make it less vulnerable to, and hence more tolerant of, various forms of deviance and mental illness.

QUESTION: *Your doctoral thesis, published in English as* Industry and Inequality, *is well-known, but much of your more recent work on trade unionism, labor markets, white-collar workers*

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and the disadvantaged, is unfamiliar to most English-speaking readers. Would you briefly summarize and explain the significance of this research?

OFFE: I think this can best be done by contrasting it with two underlying assumptions within the model of classical Marxism. This model claimed, first, that wage labor is an equalizing and homogenizing process, on the basis of which a politically conscious proletarian 'class for itself' would be formed. Secondly, this model was founded on the assumption that the work role made for a fundamental equality of individuals as workers and that, therefore, all other roles such as those of consumer, man/woman, citizen, client, inhabitant of a territory or ecosystem were either less relevant or directly derivable from the fact of individuals being workers. I think both of these propositions about the homogenizing effects of labor and its centrality can and must be questioned. At least, their questioning is a recurrent theme within my work. Concerning the homogeneity assumption: we know from studies of labor market segmentation and sociological accounts of the intermediate and new middle classes, that wage-dependent labor is by no means everywhere the same, and that there is an internal structuration within the working class. Contrary to some Marxist writers of the Second and Third Internationals, this differentiation is not some remnant of the feudal past. It is rather something that is *increasingly* reproduced. Wage labor does not homogeneously determine social existence. There are numerous categories of differentiation — including the distinctions between the primary and secondary labor markets; skilled versus unskilled labor; gender-based divisions of wage labor; differences between traditional proletarians and workers who have recently come from self-employed families; productive labor versus service labor, that is, labor that produces not physical products but things like advice which is immediately consumed; and so on. It has to be recognized that all of these divisions within the working class do not at all conform to the ideal-typical figure of the classical Marxian analysis, namely, the productive wage laborer. This increasing heterogeneity constitutes a serious problem for the collective action of the working class and its political and economic organizations. As we know well in Germany, the great divergency within the work force makes it very difficult for the system of unitary unions to unify and articulate its constituencies *as* workers. The assumption about the centrality of labor within classical Marxism must also be questioned. Here I would follow many of the detailed arguments developed by Habermas in his most recent book, *Theorie des kommunikativen Handelns*. My thesis is that under modern capitalist conditions there is no one central condition that causally determines all other conditions in a base-superstructure or primary-secondary manner. The work role is only partly determinative of social existence. For instance, workers' struggles have no necessary priority over conflicts that in some modern Communist Party doctrines are called 'popular democratic struggles'. Social conflicts arising from the role of citizenship — citizens as both politically active beings and recipients and consumers of state services — can be of great significance and therefore should not be dismissed as superficial or 'superstructural'.

QUESTION: *The combined effect of your questioning of these two core assumptions of classical Marxism, clearly, is the rejection of its model of classes as homogeneous collectivities locked in conflict. How then do you conceive of the political potential of the present-day wage labor — capital relationship? Must we bid adieu to the proletariat as Gorz and others propose? Has the emancipatory potential of the labor movement and its 'trench warfare' against capital been exhausted?*

OFFE: As I have just indicated, I think that it is sociologically and therefore politically misleading to conceive the proletariat as a unitary and homogeneous force. In much of classical and modern Marxism, this conception rests upon collectivist and objectivist

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assumptions, which have been very effectively criticized in André Gorz's marvellous book, *Farewell to the Working Class*. Granted these criticisms, I have always been, and remain fascinated by what I think is the core argument in Marx's own analysis, namely, that processes of commodification, in which labor is illegitimately treated as if it were a commodity, presuppose the existence of power relationships. For the sake of simplicity, power in this connection can be defined as the ability or inability to outwait one's opponent. Because the suppliers of labor power cannot afford to wait as long as capitalist actors on the demand side, capital can to an extent impose conditions on those who supply labor. Marx describes this difference in a number of places through the metaphor of 'living' versus 'dead' labor. Living labor must eat and therefore cannot wait, whereas something that is dead in fact has a different time structure. I consider this point to be the core idea of the theory of exploitation. Owing to this differential ability to wait, power and blackmail mechanisms are inherent in market relationships between employers and workers. This is why labor is forced into having the by no means 'natural' quality of producing surplus value. I consider this elementary Marxian thesis to be still important, and basic for any macro-sociological account of late capitalism. On the other hand, this exploitative machanism based on unequal resources of market power is in my view a phenomenon that is shrinking in its potential for determining both relations of social and political power and collective identity. So to speak, this power mechanism both remains basic and contracts, such that an ever smaller part of the entire social structure is directly determined by this mechanism. One doctoral student has expressed this point very nicely by distinguishing two types of interpretations of capitalism. One of them, the domination model, implicitly compares capital to an all-powerful father who has the capacity to positively determine everything that occurs in society. The other version, the constraint model, draws on the metaphor of capital as a dying old man who still controls some ultimate sanction and can therefore rule over his family and relatives, all of whom know and secretly hope that he will soon die. Jim O'Connor has similarly distinguished two models for analyzing capitalism. The victimization model (Braverman is an example) supposes everyone and everything is controlled and exploited by the superior and far-sighted powers of capital. This is a highly implausible argument these days. By contrast, the class struggle model emphasizes the enormous opposition of forces to capital, whose ultimate power to set constraints is nevertheless seen to derive from certain resources and powers still under its control. Pursuing this second type of argument, I think it important to understand — this is the point of the theory of decommodification — that the development of capitalism leads to a diminution of the organizing potential of capital. Analogous to the fragile old man who requires protection and support, capital more and more depends upon non-capitalist support systems such as schools, militaries, and hospitals. Although capital's power and blackmail mechanisms remain central in the functioning of the commodification process, there are more and more spheres of social life from which capital has withdrawn or been excluded. So, in response to your question concerning the potential of the labor movement, I think its potential has been exhausted to the extent that it ignores the fact that the wage labor-capital relationship is not the key determinant of social existence, and that the survival of capitalism has more and more become contingent upon non-capitalist forms of power and conflict. Any labor movement that ignores this and avoids trying to make links with conflicts generated by consumers, clients, citizens or inhabitants of an ecosystem becomes solipsistic. In my view, the crucial problem for the labor movement is how to become *more* than a labor movement. In the present period, this pro-

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blem is made more acute because the vision of full employment is undermined by capital itself. This means that the goal of absorbing the entire life energy of society into labor markets and industrial production has been rendered utopian. A more plausible scenario is that of the emergence of a bifurcated society organized around a shrinking capitalist core and an expanding periphery of non-market institutional arrangements and conditions of life. Within the productive capitalist core, workers will be relatively privileged. Fewer and fewer of them — mainly workers who are fully-employed, skilled, male and domestic (i.e., non-foreign) — will get higher and higher wages. Within the peripheries, by contrast, the old and the young, women, foreigners and mentally or physically handicapped people will be more and more marginalized and, so to speak, accommodated by institutions other than labor markets. Greater and greater periods of their lives will be spent in non-capitalist institutional frameworks, such as families, schools, hospitals, pension systems, militaries and other total or semi-total institutions. This bifurcation process is in my view not random or accidental. It is a process strategically promoted by the logic of the development of capital — by its drive to develop new products, increase exports, improve labor productivity, and so on.

QUESTION: *Could you say something more precisely about the implications of this bifurcation process for trade union strategies? Is your argument that the labor movement can survive only by becoming more than a labor movement close to the proposals of Bruno Trentin?*

OFFE: That's exactly whose ideas I have in mind. Some political and trade union organizations of the European working class have discovered that a strategy solely for labor is doomed to failure and that the historical aspirations of the workers' movement can only be continued if they abandon the idea that all immiseration and domination derive from wage labor. There are interesting experiments underway. For instance, there is the widely discussed Lucas Aerospace model, which seeks to link employment with questions concerning use values and democratization at the point of production. This model clearly transcends the traditional concerns of the labor movement. This progressive tendency is also evident in the activities of the Italian Metal Workers' Union, or in the theoretical writings of Pietro Ingrao. Since the early 1970s, Ingrao has argued that the Italian Communist Party must broaden its boundaries as a working class party to include both the middle class and the marginalized or peripheral strata of young unemployed people and part-time employed women. Unfortunately, almost the opposite tendency is evident in Germany. Under pressure from the deepening recession, German trade unions are likely to adopt the position that all progressive demands are working-class demands, and that any other collective identities and demands are negligible and, at worst, dangerous and hostile to the working-class movement. Some people have even spoken of the Americanization of the German trade unions. Concentrating on wage issues of concern to the core male working class, this movement shows signs of conforming to Sam Gompers classic description of the American working class — what it wants, in a word, is more! It is also fascinating and ironic to observe how, at the end of their long history, right-wing Social Democrats emphasize that the German SPD should after all be a working class party, and not a party absorbing the pacifism, environmentalism or civil rights concerns which are typically found within the new and old middle classes and the peripheral strata. In their view, the electoral gains generated by Bad Godesberg — the opening up of the party to the middle class — has gone too far. Any Italian Gramscian would rightly denounce this social democratic view as an extreme form of 'corporativist' insulation of the working class from all other social strata.

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QUESTION: *It is your conviction that the welfare state must be considered as an irreversible achievement, that any government is now forced to accept the obligation to provide a range of policies and services that are reproductive of both labor power and capital. What precisely are your reasons for this conviction — which in the present political climate some might understand as rather optimistic, as wishful thinking?*

OFFE: There are several reasons underpinning the thesis that the welfare state has become an irreversible achievement. In the first place, basing convictions on empirical evidence is always problematic. Nevertheless, I take this risk because I think that although there are many indications that the amount of legal claims, services and entitlements organized by the welfare state are being reduced, they have not been *wholly* questioned. In the present period, the typical pattern is that the scope, volume and timing of benefits and services are being reduced and restricted. But there is so far little evidence, say, that unemployment benefit programs or rudimentary forms of health insurance and welfare are being considered as unnecessary and therefore in need of outright abandonment. Secondly, and more seriously, I consider that the welfare state is a two-sided protective device. By removing matters of collective consumption from the point of production, by establishing a division between the primary and secondary distribution of income, the welfare state protects both workers and capitalists in a highly 'economical' manner. It is certainly true that the consequent fiscal problems impinge upon capital as well as labor. Counterfactually speaking, the welfare state can nevertheless be considered as a comparatively efficient conflict-reducing mechanism. If workers' secondary income (e.g., health coverage) had to be generated directly from primary income sources, then levels of wage demands and industrial conflict would arguably be much higher than at present. Especially when it is considered that the volume of labor power capable of being absorbed by oligopoly capital is steadily decreasing, the welfare state must be seen as a highly efficient and effective means of resolving problems of collective reproduction and therefore of reducing economic and political conflict. This is one reason why even the most extreme neoconservative ideologists are unwilling to tamper with the basic institutional arrangements of collective reproduction. These ideologists correctly sense that the 'dismantling' of the welfare state would result in widespread conflict and forms of anomic and 'criminal' behavior that together would be more destructive than the enormous burdens of the welfare state itself. The welfare state is indeed a highly problematic, costly and disruptive arrangement, yet its absence would be even more disruptive. Welfare state capitalist societies simply cannot be re-modelled into something resembling pure market societies. My final reason for this conviction is that most social needs can no longer be absorbed by arrangements that have fallen victim to the process of modernization, for instance, the extended three-generation family, community networks, or some version of the American Dream of self-help. Present-day Detroit is a case in point. A quarter of its population is close to starving, yet there are no conceivable alternatives to Federal intitiatives. The poor of Detroit are made to eat cheese — the excess production of which the state purchased some time ago, and which it redistributes in an arrogant, discriminatory and authoritarian way. The example of Detroit suggests that the conditions under which welfare is presently provided may deteriorate incredibly, becoming authoritarian or even fascistic — but it also indicates that the fact of collective reproduction is something which has become irreversible.

QUESTION: *Assuming that many welfare state policies are irreversible, how should we understand the 'new Right' and its response to the present contradictions of the welfare state? What accounts for its present vitality? Is there anything new about this new Right?*

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OFFE: I must first of all emphasize that there is a manifest discrepancy between the doctrines and practices of this new Right. For instance, while it makes no theoretical allowance for trades unions, and although it is attempting to restrict their scope of action, the new Right has not made any attempt to abolish unions along the lines of earlier fascism. In addition to such discrepancies between its theory and practice, the new Right and its arguments suffer from a serious logical flaw. Simply, their predictions are devoid of all time indicators. It is argued that the restoration of the market will counteract and heal all the ills of 'quasi-socialism,' but no one says when this will be the case. Failures can always be excused by calling for more time. The predictions of the new Right are not guided by time constraints and are thus directly immunized against fallibility criteria. To my knowledge, the new Right ideologists and strategists such as Keith Joseph have not seriously considered the absurd possibility that the patient will die before the cure becomes effective. But to return to the question: what do we mean by the *new* Right? In Western Europe, Britain and the United States, its common denominator is its deep aversion to state intervention, control and regulation. Luhmann correctly points out that this aversion to *étatisme* is something that the new Right shares, admittedly for rather different reasons, with the socialist Left. However, the new Right offers the market as the alternative to bureaucratic domination, and in this respect it is not the old fascist Right — which wanted to strengthen and 're-enchant' the repressive power of the state by invoking irrational and racist conceptions of community and nationhood. The new Right is oriented to achievement, effectiveness, efficiency and productivity. It therefore denounces all those parasitic, hedonistic and counter-productive forces that do not conform to the allegedly superior rationality of the market.

QUESTION: *But to suppose what is new about the new Right is its aversion to* étatisme *does not in practice seem to be confirmed, as you have already pointed out. It is also highly doubtful whether its theoretical discourse is so market-oriented as you say. A careful examination of the writings of, say, Nozick or Friedman suggests that the Right is rather attempting to redraw the boundaries between state and society, to redifferentiate spheres of activity that have become highly interdependent. It does not seek to defend the simple markets* and *strong states.*

OFFE: That is a very good point. One has only to consider the work of Samuel Huntington to discover the ambivalence with the new Right's theory of the state. Huntington does indeed advocate a strong state by arguing that the authority of the welfare state has been weakened by the continuous expansion of its responsibilities. The corollary of this view is that state authority can only be restored through a diminution of the functions for which the state can in turn be held responsible. In a similar way, Luhmann's recent discussion of the welfare state proposes that the proper function of the state is the making of authoritatively binding decisions against which no legitimate dissent is possible. According to Luhmann, there is a contradiction within the welfare state's distribution of goods and services: the more the state provides, the less it is able to make decisions which are authoritative and binding in the last instance. The ideology of the new Right is thus by no means anarchist. To summarize this point, I think that there are three things that are novel about the contemporary Right: its critique of the over-extended state; its refusal to draw upon the old repretoire of essentialist conceptions of the state; and its grandiose and, to say the least, unsupported hopes for the marketplace.

QUESTION: *For some time now, as you have already indicated, you have been centrally concerned with the growth of informal, para-bureaucratic processes of bargaining and policy-making among representatives of the state and key social groups, such as labor and capital. Would you explain why*

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you think that these 'corporatist' forms of policymaking are typically marked by difficulties and why, therefore, variants of corporatism may not be a viable 'solution' to the present difficulties of the welfare state?

OFFE: Many recent publications argue that the Austrian and to some extent the German models of non-state social and economic policy-making, in which organizations of labor and capital assume the character of private governments, are superior modes of creating order between the state and the market. In practice, this view has been adopted primarily by right-wing social democrats and technocratic policy makers. Their reasoning is something like: 'Why don't we find flexible ways of getting labor and capital together by forgetting about the overly complicated and rigid mechanisms of law making and public authority?'. I think there are two serious limitations of corporatist proposals of this type. One of them derives from the fact that corporatist mechanisms of decision-making tend to be exploitative of third parties such as consumers — price fixing and production quotas being familiar examples. Corporatist arrangements simply do not lead to the equitable resolution of social and political problems. They rather export these problems, by shifting burdens onto others who happen not to have been present at the bargaining table. The second deficiency of corporatism has to do with the asymmetry built into the bargaining relations between capitalist and working class organizations. Corporatist arrangements are usually considered to comprise 'tripartite' relations between organizations of employers, labor and the state. Of course, in order for these triangular relations to operate in a non-exploitative and non-discriminatory way, it would have to be supposed that agreements are equally binding on all partners. This supposition would only hold under conditions in which the representatives of capital had as much governing power over their constituent member firms and their pricing and investment policies as the representatives of labor had over the wage demands of individual workers. But, under conditions of private property, this is typically *not* the case. In Germany, for instance, the framework of collective bargaining effectively prohibits workers from unofficially striking. By contrast, the promises and proclamations made by employers' associations on behalf of their member investors and employers are not at all legally binding upon the behavior of those investors and employers: individual elements of private capital remain formally free to do what they want within the market place. It is this asymmetry between labor and capital which constantly tends to disrupt the empirical consensus necessary for the viable functioning of *ad hoc*, non-constitutional, corporatist mechanisms of decision-making. The question for all participants within corporatist arrangements, thus, is whether they are actually willing to insist upon the socialization of the means of production as a necessary precondition of the fair and proper functioning of those arrangements. If this insistence were forthcoming, a close connection could be identified between corporatist arrangements and syndicalism, or what G.D.H. Cole and the Austro-Marxists in the 1920s called functional democracy — democracy based on functional rather than territorial forms of representation. This democratic socialist version of corporatism would not only signal the abolition of private ownership of the means of production; it could also allow for the admission of new and multi-faceted forms of representation which would ensure, in turn, that *all* relevant interests and points of view — and not just those of capital, labor and the state — were fed into the negotiating process.

QUESTION: *Your recent writings speak of a whole variety of new social movements, such as feminism, environmentalism and the peace movement. Are these movements symptomatic of an emerging period in which class divisions and political parties are no longer the key determinants of*

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social and political struggle? What is new *about these new social movements? What feeds their development?*

OFFE: My interest in the new social movements has been prompted by the fact that a new political paradigm has emerged in Germany and several other European countries. By the term paradigm, I mean a constellation of collective actors, issues, values and modes of action. The collective actors within this new political paradigm are often ascriptively defined, and include groups such as young people, females or inhabitants of certain geographic areas. Their demands are to a significant extent non-economic, in the sense that they cannot be satisfied through distributive and productive means; they are concerned less with the quantity of income and wealth than with the quality of the natural and social conditions of life. The mode of action of these groups tends to be unorganized and non-institutionalized, spontaneous and direct. Environmentalism, pacifism, urban movements and various human and civil rights movements (e.g., those defending the rights of women, homosexuals and prisoners) all belong within this category. I think there are basically two things that are new about these social movements. First, their location within the social structure is by no means marginal. Old social movements such as late-nineteenth century American populism typically grew out of social strata whose institutional and material resources of power were being negated or threatened by processes of modernization. Support for the new social movements, by contrast, predominantly derives not from peripheral or underprivileged strata but from groups who themselves play a rather central role in steering and managing what Daniel Bell has called 'post-industrial' society. These core groups are relatively well-to-do, and include people from the new middle classes and the professional and service sectors who have the highest levels of education and the greatest cognitive skills. This characteristic feature of the new social movements reinforces their second novel aspect, namely, that they do not protest in the name of preserving a traditional past that is presently threatened by modernization and rationalization. Within liberal and social democratic journalism and political commentary, there has been a strong tendency to describe these movements as Luddites who idealistically yearn for the good old days of simple, communal life. I think this is highly inaccurate. If sections of the new movements appear to idealize past forms of life, they usually do so in a self-mocking and ironical way — for instance, anti-nuclear protestors playfully liken themselves to a new-defunct Germanic tribe by declaring a Free Republic of Wendland. The social movements are by no means romantic adherents of some premodern view of social order. Rather, they are inspired and motivated by the view that processes of modernization that rely exclusively on instrumental and strategic rationality are inherently counterproductive and destructive. They are moved to protest by the fact that greater military security creates and increases the likelihood of war; that the increased production of goods, especially industrial goods, produces negative environmental results; that more and more areas of social life tend to come under state coordination and surveillance; and so on. None of these protests normatively adhere to a romanticized past: they are rather a response to a future that is seen as threatening or potentially threatening. In contrast to old social movements such as the labor movement, the new social movements do not claim to know what the future will look like. Their concerns are in a sense more limited and even conservative. These movements are not in principle opposed to modernization as such. They seek to defend what is worth defending, to check and control the perverse and self-destructive consequences of technical, military, economic, urban and social policy modernization. As I see it, these movements project a *modern* critique of modernization. They constitute an

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attempt to increase the learning capacity of late capitalist systems by pointing to their systematic blindness and dangerous effects. This links up with their conviction, moreover, that parliamentary, representative, party-based forms of democracy have an insufficient learning capacity and are therefore incapable of anticipating and dealing adequately with the destructive consequences of modernization. The new social movements consequently insist upon the need for *additional* forms of grass-roots politics that can enrich existing political institutions, more effectively process the new types of resistance to the defects of modernization and, thereby, increase the learning capacity of the entire social system.

QUESTION: *Would you follow Touraine's thesis that these movements are likely to coalesce into a single and dominant social movement, just as the workers' movement did during the earlier phase of industrial capitalism? Or would you reject this possibility, on the grounds that processes of structural differentiation prohibit the formation of a unified social movement?*

OFFE: I am not certain about this. I do think that the grand historical constructions to be found in some of the writings of Touraine are premature, and I doubt whether it is necessary to conceive of social movements as organizationally and ideologically integrated and unified. For what is also novel about the new social movements is their resistance to unification, even as an ultimate goal. Touraine's method of sociological intervention is clearly designed to help overcome this tendency by promoting their self-awareness and self-unification. It may be, however, that the *ad hoc*, fragmented and incoherent character of these movements cannot really be overcome. Further, as a means of bringing a more complete set of criteria of goodness into political life, I have much sympathy with the idea that this fragmentation can in itself help to increase the learning capacity of political systems by diminishing their degree of 'blindness' or unawareness of foreseeable and often catastrophic consequences. I am in fact deeply convinced that all future political designs will be mixed and to some degree 'eclectic' designs. Political development in this sense would take the form of a more multi-faceted and pluralistic combination of different forms of economic, technological and political rationality, such that the old and the allegedly obsolete would be mixed and made compatible with the new at a higher level. This abandonment of the opposition 'old versus new' is well under way within the new social movements. Whereas old social movements, such as the youth movements of the early 1900s, rejected cities, technology and modern music in the name of a whole and principled life, the new social movements attempt to accomodate an eclectic range of elements of the old and the new. An interesting example of this is the major German national newspaper, *Die Tageszeitung*. As something like the mouthpiece of the new social movements, it is a very amateurish operation. In terms of journalistic practice, it is deliberately unprofessional yet, at the same time, it is a high technology, computer-based operation that combines the new and the old, the highly professional and the absolutely non-professional. Apparently it is all a contradictory and impossible synthesis — but it works very nicely.

QUESTION: We'd like to ask, finally, about the implications of your theoretical and empirical writings for the democratic socialist tradition. In the present context, and notwithstanding the promise of the new social movements, there is widespread skepticism about politics, a withdrawal from traditional party politics and a considerable cynicism about the failures of 'real socialism.' These developments appear to discredit many, if not most traditional socialist ideals. The pressing questions remain: How can socialist politics best be developed in the present period? What does it mean to be a democratic socialist today?

OFFE: One recurrent theme in Marx that I have always found illuminating is that of

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the self-valorization of capital. Marx characterizes the logic of capitalism as 'insatiable' and self-centered; it is an economic system which has blind disregard for any needs of use-values external to its own purposes. This blind recklessness of capitalism is as strongly evident today as it was in the time of Marx, and I would therefore say that any contemporary socialist practice must question this blindness of capitalism by applying use-value criteria to the social developments for which capital is responsible. In this connection, there can be no doubt that the positive ideals of democracy, justice, emancipation and self-determination have lost much of their programmatic clarity and even attractiveness for many people on the Left. Yet I think that the significance of these old ideals for modern socialist politics can be productively reformulated if we understand them as oriented to the goal of negating the reckless characteristics of capitalism — as attempts, so to speak, to resist the blind logic of development of the capitalist system by forcing it to develop greater learning capacities. I see four important areas in which contemporary socialist politics can do this. The first, and probably most obvious area is that of employment and unemployment. For reasons I have already given, the proportion of life activity that is today structured by wage labor contracts has been considerably reduced. Given the extent to which people's lives have become decommodified in this sense, I think that the process of decommodification itself could be turned into something more positive. There are lots of experiments under way in this area, and while no really promising program has been forthcoming, I think the Left cannot ignore questions of decommodification and their expanded importance. At the same time, it is clear that we cannot demand full employment. This goal is unrealistic and in any case utterly anti-socialist. Any future kind of full employment will be terror: it would make neither economic, political, ecological nor military sense. We must find ways of resisting the unemployment trap, by questioning the curious fact that the working class movement began as a struggle against wage labor and is now united in a superficial way in its struggle for employment through wage labor. One major task of socialist theory and politics is therefore to develop forms of useful activity that are not based on wage labor. The conventional Keynesian argument that these new forms are less productive or detrimental to growth and welfare must be countered by redefining the terms in which productivity is today defined in a very one-sided way that is biased against concrete, useful labor. We must seek to escape the unemployment trap not be demanding a return to full employment, but by creating socially useful alternatives to the idea of full employment through wage labor. This is a major task, and I therefore think that the old idea of cooperatives — non-capitalist forms of producing useful things — deserves a contemporary renaissance. The second area of concern for socialist theory and politics must be the defense of democratic rights. I do not believe that the tighter controls and surveillance of the welfare state are synonymous with the maintenance and expansion of democratic rights. If it is true, as I've argued, that welfare state capitalist systems tend ever more to subject all life activity to detailed regulation, then the learning capacity of these systems, their capacity to check their contradictory and self-paralyzing tendencies, can only be preserved through the expansion of democratic rights — and that implies defending rights of democratic participation in areas of life (e.g., workers' control of production) in addition to, and beyond the realm of parliamentary, representative democracy. Learning capacity is the opposite of blindness, and I therefore take it that the most abstract common denominator of the difference between capitalism and socialism is the latter's superior and expanded capacity for learning. This is why I consider that environmental or ecological concerns constitute a third and very important component of

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contemporary socialist theory and politics. The environmental movement can greatly contribute to the socialist resistance to the logic of blindness of modern capitalism by forcing political and economic elites to evaluate the long-term consequences of the operations of the political and economic system. In the present period, the front of technical and economic modernization has become very fragile. The systemic dimensions of environmental problems have produced a deep insecurity and unease within liberal and social democratic political elites; problems arising out of the chemical poisoning of forests, the depletion of raw materials, and the disposal of nuclear waste jeopardize future production and therefore become understandable even in the language of the system. This insecurity about the blindness of the present system is evidently deepened by developments within established scientific-technical circles. The scientific-technical professions are deeply divided about such questions as scientific rationality and risk assessment technology, and it is therefore not surprising that important elements of resistance to blind modernization come from these professions. The American term whistle-blowing is appropriate here: the bearers of scientific-technical rationality themselves publicize the dirty secrets and irrationality of the practices they are part of. They therefore come to insist on the need for greater learning capacity within the system of production and administration. Within industrial, political and scientific-technical circles, then, the cognitive potential to overcome blindness is generated by the very same processes of development that reinforce blindness. This cognitive potential has to be utilized by the environmental movement and by socialist politics. Finally, there is the question of peace. Strongly paralleling the ecology movement, the new peace movement is defined by its critique of the disastrous consequences of modernization — of blind faith in high technology, the arms race and ever more complicated and dangerous strategic planning. With the possible exception of France, this new movement is everywhere linked to the Left, although it is not controlled or dominated by any single political party. In this respect, the old alignments have changed, and the new peace movement cannot so easily be labelled and denounced as before: just as ecologists are no longer nature-freaks, peace movement activists are no longer simply communists. As with the ecology movement, the new peace movement is an alliance of protestors and elite defectors. Both movements have developed their cases by stealing the most powerful arguments from the system itself. In the German peace movement, for example, one of the more prominent and respected activists is the former general, Bastian, who has been very instrumental in clarifying to the public the dangerous inconsistencies and blindness inherent in the defense strategies that are unanimously adopted by the present political elites. To summarize: it is my view that democratic socialism is today being transformed into ecosocialism. Ecosocialism emphasizes the need to resist and arrest the further blind 'evolution' of processes of capitalist rationalization. Surprisingly, while this new ecosocialist project is very unclear about what it favors, its real strength as an alliance of forces lies in its clarity about what it opposes. Ecosocialism is defined by its overall resistance to that logic already described by Marx — the blind and self-destructive logic of the self-valorization of capital.

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CONVERSATION WITH OTTO MADURO*

by José Casanova

CASANOVA: *In the "Foreword" to your book* Religion and Social Conflicts, *Luis Ogade begins with a series of texts from the Latin American Anticommunist Federation, the Rockefeller Report, the Rand Study for the State Department and the like denouncing the Church as "subversive" and "revolutionary." He points out that the Right has begun to appreciate the revolutionary and subversive potential of religion, while the Left seems to continue the old stereotypes, such as religion being "the opium of the people," or a traditional residuum likely to disappear with the advance of science and modernity. Why do you think the Left has not been able to appreciate the alleged subversive and revolutionary potential of religion? One possible explanation would be that until very recently religion did not realize this potential. If so, when do you think that the change in the role of religion began to take place and why? To what do you attribute these changes? To internal transformations within Catholicism or to external social changes?*

MADURO: I will speak mainly of Christianity and more particularly, most of the time, of Catholicism, it being the religion with which I am personally acquainted. I do not think that the revolutionary potential of Christianity and, particularly, of Catholicism has appeared only recently. But the degree and significance of this potential has become much more visible in Latin America during the last 25 years. There are many factors, some internal to Latin America, others external to this region; some internal to the Church, others external to it, which have contributed to the eruption of this revolutionary potential of Christianity. First among these factors, one should mention the Second Vatican Council and the Papacies of John XXIII and Pual VI. The three together consituted the main starting point for the transformation of the role of the Church in Latin America. The weight they gave to the laity within the Church; the authorization they gave to extend some experiments which were taking place within the Church all over the world; the emphasis they placed upon the social role of the Church in pursuing justice and peace, rather than in securing law and order; a certain criticism of private property and of capitalism, together with a certain recognition of the active subjective role of the poor in the construction of a more just world, all these elements had, no doubt, a very important impact upon Latin American Catholicism, contributing to free those forces which were still checked but already growing within the Church and within society at large. Another set of factors comes from the political realities of Latin America during the 1960s. The Cuban Revolution had a large impact on many working class and peasant movements, as well as on leftist organizations throughout Latin America. The Cuban Revolution demonstrated that it was possible to overthrow not only an oppressive government, but also capitalism as a socio-economic regime and, furthermore, that it was even possible for a small country to face successfully the threat of U.S. imperialism. The first reaction of the Latin American Church was one of extreme opposition to the revolution, and it served at first to radicalize the dormant anti-communism dominant among the Catholic hierarchy and clergy. But, in the long run — especially after the crucial 1964 coup in Brazil — a growing number of sectors within the Church began to perceive differently the significance of the Cuban Revolution.

CASANOVA: *There is, I think, no doubt as to the demonstrative value of the Cuban revolution with respect to the possibility of overthrowing an oppressive government, of transforming a socio-economic*

*This interview was conducted in New York City in January 1983.

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system and of standing up to American imperialism. But were not these gains bought at a certain price? Cuba became dependent on the Soviet Union both socio-economically, in the sense that the Cuban economy became integrated as a dependent economy within the Soviet economic system, and in terms of the societal model of development which Cuba has followed. Moreover, as a reaction to the Cuban Revolution, counter-revolution in the guise of military dictatorships has triumphed throughout Latin America. In this sense, the Cuban Revolution has also served as an obstacle to social transformation elsewhere in Latin America.

MADURO: It has to be pointed out, first of all, that prior to 1970 the Cuban dependency on the Soviet Union was more a fiction than a fact. Actually, the conflicts between Cuba and the Soviet Union were such that at a certain point, the Cuban government decided to suppress the Communist Party and even sent some of its leaders to the firing squad and others into prison. Any propaganda on behalf of the Soviet Union was prohibited in Cuba for a long time and the government consciously adopted the Czech rather than the Soviet model. Cuba also supported nationalist-socialist non-pro-Soviet guerrilla movements throughout Latin America. These are hardly signs of dependency. Only around 1969-70, especially after the sugar cane crisis, did the dependency increase, softening during the Allende regime and deepening again after the overthrow of Allende. Concerning the political repercussions of the Cuban Revolution in Latin America, you are probably right. The military throughout Latin America, and even many so-called democratic parties — Social Democratic, Christian Democratic, and Liberal — often used the Cuban Revolution as an excuse to justify harsh repression. Particularly after the 1964 coup in Brazil, it became more evident in country after country that the traditional developmentalist liberal approach was no longer viable. It had failed to solve the problems of Latin America, and it had actually led those societies into greater misery and greater dependency. The alliance of certain sectors of the Latin American bourgeoisie with certain sectors of the military and with the American State Department now adopted the so-called "doctrine of national security," which called for the overthrow of democratic regimes and the imposition of military dictatorships. This solution, imposed first in Brazil and then throughout Latin America, was able to enforce productivity without having to deal with the political and economic problems caused by labor unrest. Actually, this political transformation was also one of the starting points of the process of change within the Church. At a moment when the expression of dissent and the organization of protest was not possible in any sphere of civil society, the Church became the only available channel through which not only the working classes and peasants but also intellectuals and the middle-classes could express their dissent, communicate, gather information, protest, and organize. Thus the Church became the place of conscientization, organization, and mobilization for a large number of popular groups.

CASANOVA: *In the face of this transformation, why do you think the Left, particularly the Marxist Left, has failed to appreciate this revolutionary or, at least, "subversive" potential of the Church?*

MADURO: This problem has deep and old historical roots. Historically, socialism was first born Christian, but was immediately condemned and persecuted by the hierarchies of the different Christian churches in Europe. Slowly, throughout the 19th century, to be a socialist and an atheist became for many people the only viable alternative. To remain a church-going Christian meant, in this context, to be forced to reject socialism. In fact, until the papacy of Leo XIII, Catholics were asked to reject democracy, national independence, labor unions, actually almost everything which today we would call "human rights." Individuals and groups, forced to choose between liberalism or socialism and the Church, slowly became first anti-clerical, then anti-

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religious, and finally atheist. In this sense, the contemporary contradiction between socialism and religion owes very much to the concrete socio-historical conditions in which socialism was born in the Western European context of the 19th century. Confronted with the choice between a reactionary feudal religious ideology and a revolutionary bourgeois atheist ideology, the socialist movement began to adopt first anti-clericalism and, finally, atheism as its worldview. In a sense, Engels was the first continental socialist atheist. He was already an atheist before becoming a socialist following his conversation with Moses Hess. Shortly thereafter he went to England where he met the only socialist-atheist movement then existing in the world, that of Robert Owens. Engels noticed, however, that their meetings were a carbon copy of the meetings of many a Protestant sect in England — the same hours, the same songs with different words, similar places, similar rituals, etc.

CASANOVA: *You characterize yourself as a Christian-Marxist or as a Marxist-Christian. What does Christianity and what does Marxism bring to your position? Why the need for this combination? Could you not be simply a Marxist revolutionary or a Christian revolutionary?*

MADURO: Although this may sound dissonant to many Marxist ears, when I say that I am a Marxist Christian, I mean "Christian" to be the noun and "Marxist" to be the adjective. For me, Christianity has a more profound thrust than Marxism. I see Marxism mainly as an instrument for an understanding of capitalist society and for its radical transformation. In this sense, I feel that Marxism is doomed to the museum of history the moment capitalism is overthrown. What Christianity gives me is a particular understanding of human nature, of the human community and of human potentialities, a transcendental, if you wish, comprehension of human reality. By contrast, Marxism for me is precisely the main, though not the only, instrument to understand the concrete conditions within which humankind is living today under capitalism. Christianity gives me the ground and the impulse to give myself to the cause of justice, whereas Marxism is the concrete historical tool which helps to understand and to overcome the concrete historical forms of injustice in present society.

CASANOVA: *It is obvious from your book* [Religion and Social Conflict] *that Marxism plays a critical role* vis-à-vis *religion; what role, if any, can religion play* vis-à-vis *Marxism?*

MADURO: Both elements are in a dialectical tension, not only in my mind, but in the present process of politics and religion in Latin America. The relation between Marxism and Catholicism today in Latin America is partially one of contradiction, partially one of complementarity, thus making for a dynamic relation in which the one element becomes the critical pole of the other. Indeed, Marxism has played, is playing, and hopefully will continue to play a fertile critical role toward religion, serving to point out the concrete social conditions under which religion suffers in a class society. Marxism has contributed to religious self-criticism by underscoring how, within a class society, all spheres of social life, including religion, tend to be coopted and instrumentalized by the ruling classes in order to perpetuate themselves in power, perhaps without the ruling classes or the religious leaders even knowing it. In our contact with Marxism, we have learned to discover how social oppression expresses itself through religion, how it even modifies religion for the sake of social oppression. Equally important, however, is the critical role which religion is playing in Latin America *vis-à-vis* Marxism. Christianity has to remind Marxists that history is not necessity, that history is the place of conscious or unconscious human freedom, that is, that socialism is not going to come necessarily, that if we want to build a more humane and just society we have to fight for it. Christianity also contributes to the de-sacralization of socialism. It reminds us that no human society is perfect, that we are not able to build paradise on earth, that any

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society we may build will always be in need of perfecting and that, therefore, we should have not only the possibility but the moral obligation of criticizing, transforming, and improving it. Another more concrete contribution from Christian theology and from Christian organizations and movements in Latin America to Marxist thought and organization has been the critique of the Marxist-Leninist conception of the revolutionary party and the revolutionary avant-garde. One of the things we have learned in the Latin American Church after 1964 is the fact that we do not know what the people need, what their dreams are, and what they themselves may contribute to their own progress if we do not share the life conditions of the people.

CASANOVA: *The differentiation between subjective and objective class consciousness leads precisely to the introduction of the vanguard party in order to mediate between the subjective and the true objective needs of the people. In this sense both the Marxist-Leninist conception of the vanguard party and the Catholic Church differentiate between the laymen and the people, on the one hand, and the priests and the professional revolutionaries, on the other. Both work for the people, even if sometimes they have to work against the people. There is a danger that these two elitist-managerial conceptions could become fused in Latin American Christian Socialism. How is one to avoid this danger?*

MADURO: In the last twenty years of struggle in Latin America we have discovered the need for what Gramsci called "organic intellectuals" of the people. But these intellectuals are not simply built overnight by the sheer will of a particular group of individuals or a particular institution. Is it true that the majority of the working classes, agrarian as well as industrial, have lacked the time, the leisure, and the instruments needed to develop their own intellectual capacities, so that they may become the subjects capable of expressing, systematizing, and organizing their own interests. This has made possible the appearance in all class societies of a particular group of intellectuals which usually shares the privileges and the interests of the ruling classes and whose world-view is usually more in accordance with their class origins than with the interests of the exploited working classes. In Latin America, however, we have been discovering lately that the working classes are capable of developing their own intellectuals, either from within or by converting intellectuals from other social groups to their interests, who thus become truly "organic intellectuals" of the exploited classes. In this process we have come to question in practice the traditional Leninist conception of the party, even though this has not yet developed into an explicit theoretical critique of Leninism.

CASANOVA: *At times, one senses in your book an instrumentalist interpretation of religion in the service of the class struggle. On the one hand, you criticize what you call "certain allegedly Christian attitudes and traditions that appear to be an anti-evangelical instrumentalization of the Church in the service of social injustice." But is not what you propose an instrumentalization of the Church and of religion in the service of social revolution? Why should this instrumentalization be less anti-evangelical than the instrumentalization of religion by the ruling classes? Is there something in the gospel which would legitimize one instrumentalization more than the other?*

MADURO: I am not proposing a new instrumentalization of the gospel. I think that the gospel and the Bible contain in themselves a sufficiently clear and strong message of liberation, a message of justice and peace on earth. What we are struggling for at this moment in Latin America is precisely to give the Bible back to the people so that the people may again become able to grasp the most profound and essential message of the Scriptures. Not by chance, it is frequently said in the Bible that the rich are not able to understand the word of God. It is also not accidental that one of the main devices used by the dominant groups throughout the history of Christianity in order to instrumentalize the Christian message has been to keep the Bible hostage, hindering

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the people from having a direct, undistorted, and communal access to the Bible. It is true that the Protestant Reformation partially broke with this Catholic tradition, but the same Luther who gave the Bible back to the people in German, in the vulgar language, supported the bloody repression of those German peasants who, Bible in hand, had revolted, demanding the elimination of all forms of oppression. Throughout the history of Christianity, giving the Bible back to the oppressed has proved to be dangerous for the oppressors. In Latin America, we are not struggling for a new instrumentalization of the Bible. We only want to free the Bible from the hands of the oppressors and give it back to the oppressed.

CASANOVA: *It seems as if religion is always the instrument of one class or another. The question is whether it is going to be the religion of the oppressors or the religion of the oppressed. The situation you describe in Latin America is that of a radical polarization between two classes, whereby religion is forced to take sides. Socialist transformation becomes the ultimate goal in terms of which everything, including religion, is analyzed and evaluated. This brings us back to the issues of the role of the intellectuals and of the historical subject of the revolution. Your analysis seems to operate with a very simple dichotomous model of class conflict. There are only two classes, the dominant and the dominated, the oppressors and the oppressed. The role of the intellectuals in this conflict can only be to take sides with one or the other class. Against this model, the charges have been made that Marxism is the opium of the intellectuals and that socialism is the system of class rule of the intellectuals, especially of the new intelligentsia. In your work you emphasize the need for a self-critical sociology of religion which would see through the social role of religion in class domination. Do you see a similar need for a self-critical Marxist sociology? Are you self-critical enough about the role of the revolutionary intelligentsia? How are we going to ensure that this time the intelligentsia will truly work for the oppressed rather than establish its own rule?*

MADURO: All too frequently, when Marxists analyze socialist societies they cease being Marxists, their analysis no longer operates within Marxist categories, and they take for granted the official definition of the situation as if it were identical with the hidden ideological interests of those groups which have the power to define reality. The normal tendency of the intellectuals in those societies in which there is a division between intellectual and manual labor is to oppose any attempt to create a society in which this division disappears, where everybody becomes an intellectual and a manual laborer and where, therefore, the intellectuals cease to exist as a privileged group. There is no guarantee against the unconscious but natural attempt of the intellectuals in moments of crisis, when they are pushed apart from the ruling classes and toward the oppressed, to establish themselves as the new rulers. But there are some mechanisms which could be developed in order to reduce this danger, mechanisms which are not likely, however, to appeal to the majority of the intellectuals. One of these would be the re-education of the intellectuals, by and through sharing the material conditions of the working classes.

CASANOVA: *A kind of cultural revolution?*

MADURO: Yes, but a cultural revolution which has to happen even before the political overthrow of the capitalist regime. It is unlikely that, once in power, the intellectuals will carry on a cultural revolution which also has material implications, namely, the reduction of their privileges as intellectuals and as leaders. Going back to the experience of the Latin American Church in recent years, many priests, nuns, and Catholic intellectuals have begun to realize that it is possible and joyful, even though it may also be hard and painful, to learn from the people, for example, to learn that it is possible to live with fewer privileges, material as well as symbolic, and still be able, especially if one has a religious motivation, to obtain a greater enjoyment from the fact of giving oneself to the people.

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CASANOVA: *When you talk of "the people," which kind of category is it? Do we need, perhaps, to differentiate between various groups and classes?*

MADURO: Of course. I am talking mainly of the peasants and the workers. In many Latin American countries we also have a lot to learn from the Indians. I think Paolo Freire in Brazil was the first one to point out what has become a topic among liberation theologians, namely that the intellectuals may have much to give, but that there are two basically different ways of giving. You may consolidate the dependency of those who receive, or you may help those who receive to grow in a way that you become less necessary for them. The Latin American experience is teaching us that intellectuals can be revolutionary only insofar as they consciously cease to exist as intellectuals, by promoting among the working classes the capacity of doing without intellectuals. It boils down to giving up our privileges, learning to enjoy a different way of life, sinking ourselves in the masses, not in order to cease being intellectuals, but in order to enable more and more people to share and develop these intellectual capacities.

CASANOVA: *Let us go back to the question of the revolutionary potential of religion, of its potential for human emancipation. Is this potential by nature, that is, inherent in the nature of religion itself, or is it in certain of its contemporary forms? In your book you emphasize that the role of religion depends, almost solely, on its position in class conflicts. What happens to religion after the revolution? What about the utopian power of religion to transcend reality? Where does this power come from?*

MADURO: I think that religion is a human creation, but not in the sense that there is no supernatural or supra-human reality or dimension. Religion is precisely the relation created by us with that transcendent dimension of being. In a sense, the revolutionary or, if you wish, utopian aspect of religion is embedded in the essence of religion. Historically, however, in class societies, religion suffers a process by which the relation with the transcendent is mediated, re-elaborated and monopolized by a caste or status group of religious specialists, which usually tends to fulfill a particular social function, namely that of doing away with the subversive potential which is entailed in every relationship between a community and the transcendent. The transcendent divinity, or whatever you may call it, poses, at least implicitly, the negation of the present state of affairs, the possibility of transcending the present reality with its oppressive social structures, its misery, and its suffering. In this sense, religion brings us near the object of our desires, hopes, and communal dreams. Thus, I would argue that the revolutionary potential, that is, this subversive capacity or that utopian function, is inherent in the nature of religion. In another sense, however, religion is also a human creation, and once it is re-elaborated within a class society, this subversive, critical, utopian, and transcendent dimension is emasculated; it is literally imprisoned by those who perform the role of religious specialists, who expropriate the subjective and objective capacity of the oppressed to recreate their own relation with the transcendent.

CASANOVA: *It seems as if the Latin American liberation theology has incorporated Bloch's theory of utopia.*

MADURO: We owe a lot to Bloch. He was probably the first, and one of the few Marxist-Leninists or members of a communist party, to underscore the subversive and utopian function of religion. Until now, very few Marxist intellectuals have followed his example. Bloch's influence upon the theology of liberation was important, perhaps not directly, but through Protestant and Catholic German theologians like Moltmann and Metz.

CASANOVA: *You talk of Latin American Catholicism, of a Latin American perspective, of the need to liberate oneself from the dependence of foreign thought and foreign categories. What do you mean?*

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What makes a perspective Latin American, be it Latin American Catholicism or Latin American Marxism?

MADURO: Latin America has no reality independent of dependency. We are a colonial territory. This has to be the point of departure for anything that may be created in the present and which is to have some meaning for the future of our continent. We are a mestizo continent. We were colonized by the Spaniards, and some of the most crucial unifying factors in Latin America were, indeed, given to us by the colonial system, especially through language and religion. Having suffered 500 years of dependency, we are a colonial or a neo-colonial territory. What differentiates us, however, from the rest of the Third World, is that our unity is clearer than that of Asia or Africa. This unity comes primarily from a common religion and a common language, which touch upon many other aspects of our culture, though there is by no means a uniform culture throughout Latin America. What further distinguishes us from countries like Poland or Northern Ireland is the fact that, in our case, the struggle against the oppressive groups, against the ruling classes, is also a struggle within this unitary culture, namely, a struggle with the Church. The Latin American Church represents not only the oppressed but also the oppressors. Our struggle is not only a struggle with the Church against the establishment, but an internal struggle within the Church itself, against those who have monopolized the legitimate interpretation of Catholicism for five hundred years.

CASANOVA: *This is a very important point, because sometimes there is a tendency to explain dependency purely as an external problem, as the result of external oppression. It is crucial to see the oppressors within Latin American society, and the roots of this dependency within the Latin American structures, traditions, and culture. In your work, you imply that the revolutionary transformation can only be viable if it incorporates the Latin American traditions. Yet this is problematic since precisely this tradition has played a very negative historical role in Latin American development. We need to undertake, more seriously than has been done by the literature of imperialism and dependency, a critical analysis of the Hispanic social and cultural heritage of Latin America, stressing that this cultural tradition itself needs also to be revolutionized and transformed.*

MADURO: One important internal obstacle to the transformation of Latin America has been the type of ruling oligarchy that was left after independence. The organization of society after independence was basically the same as the one created by Spain in Latin America.

CASANOVA: *In your book, this organization of society is identified with general European feudal developments. At this point I would like to explore the unique character of Spanish feudalism, of Spanish socio-economic and political structures, of Spanish Catholicism, and of Spanish culture in general. It may help to explain, to a certain extent, the differences in North American and Latin American development.*

MADURO: I think that much of the literature against dependency has overly stressed the role of the imperial powers today in the maintenance of underdevelopment. The imperial powers, particularly the U.S., are mainly responsible for supporting the internal ruling groups in Latin America and helping them to maintain themselves in power. It is not so much a case of direct exploitation as of support to those internal groups which go on exploiting Latin American soil and labor and who pay homage to those who help them militarily, ideologically, and technologically. But the other aspect of your comment is also important. To put it in Weberian terms, the kind of economic behavior and ethics that were imposed by Spanish colonialism on Latin America and that were largely maintained after independence, have left Latin America with an ethos unsuitable for capitalist development. This cuts both ways, however, for the radically

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anti-capitalist character of Spanish Catholicism may become a positive, progressive factor in building a Latin America that does not follow the path traced by the U.S. In this sense, it is short-sighted to see only how Catholicism in Latin America has worked against the development of a capitalist spirit. Catholicism nourishes, at least implicitly, a very strong anti-capitalist ethos that can eventually become a socialist ethos, not necessarily in the strict Marxian sense, but in a broader sense.

CASANOVA: *In this context, I would like to raise the issue of revolution, social justice* and *political freedom. I have no doubts concerning the possibility of the Catholic Church in Latin America working towards some kind of economic transformation. The Church could easily accept some kind of welfare-socialist economic system. I am much more skeptical, however, about the role of the Church in the democratization of political life in Latin America, now and after the revolution. There is, on the one hand, the corporatist tendency of Catholicism, especially of Spanish Catholicism, and, on the other hand, the parallelism between the mediated structures of salvation of the Church — a result of the differentiation between priesthood and laity — and the mediated structures of political organization, where you would find again the differentiation between the experts or a revolutionary leading group and the people. It is obvious that Catholicism and the Church will play an important role in any revolutionary transformation in Latin America and will probably continue to play an important role after the revolution. Can we expect this society to be a democratic one without a democratization of the internal structures of the Church? When you talk of self-governing socialism, is this possible in Latin America, without having a self-governing Church?*

MADURO: I would like to stress, first of all, that all these changes which are taking place in the Catholic Church in Latin America are not yet the main current anywhere. It is still a minority movement. How can we talk of a socialist future when we have not yet guaranteed massive participation of the Church and of the Latin American people in general in the struggle for justice and peace? But I would agree that it is practically impossible for a non-democratic Church to foster a truly democratic society. That is why, I feel rather awkward at some declarations of certain bishops demanding that the Nicaraguan government become more democratic, when the structures which they are perpetuating within the Church are most undemocratic, monarchical, and authoritarian. It is easy for them to play a democratic critical function from the opposition. It seems it is much more difficult to clean their own house. The new Latin American Catholic movement is demanding not only a revolution in society through religion, but also a revolution within religion itself. The very fact that both oppressors and oppressed are part of the same Church has increasingly forced the progressive forces within the Church to strive for a radical transformation of the Church itself. Here, there is again a difference with Poland or Northern Ireland. In Latin America we cannot foster a liberating role of the Church in society without simultaneously building within the Church structures and modes of thought that are in themselves liberating and democratic, indeed, that are a prefiguration of the society we are struggling for.

CASANOVA: *This poses the question of a unified or a uniform Church. The Church is, by definition, an institution which claims a monopoly in the religious field. The unity of the Catholic Church in Latin America based, as it were, on this monopoly is becoming increasingly more difficult to maintain. As you have pointed out, social conflicts in society are reflected within the Church. In the case of Protestantism, this social differentiation was one of the sources of denominationalism. Different social groups developed different sects that represented the ideal and material interests of the given social groups. To a certain extent, this process of denominationalism is also taking place within the Catholic Church in the guise of specialized organizations and movements. The HOAC and JOC, for instance, are specialized movements within the Church, catering to the working class or to working youth. Catholic*

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Action catered to the traditional middle classes, the Jesuits to the upper bourgeoisie, the Opus Dei to the new managerial classes, the Cursillos to the petty bourgeoisie. The specific division of pastoral labor may, of course, change from country to country. But it leads to a process of differentiation and segmentation of religious interests, precisely because the Catholic Church is facing today a religious public which is much more socially differentiated due to the modernization of traditional Catholic societies. Do you think that the Catholic Church will be able to maintain its traditional unity and uniformity, perpetuating itself as a church, perhaps as a kind of umbrella organization of all these differentiated religious movements? Or may schismatic and sectarian movements develop within the Church? If so, how do you foresee the role of these sectarian movements? Will they be able to transform the Church, will they be coopted eventually or will they have to break with the Church, building new sects as in the Protestant model?

MADURO: There are, indeed, internal conflicts within the Church, but I do not think there is a strong possibility of schismatic movements developing within the Latin American Church. More probable and also more dangerous for the future, not only of the Church, but also of the continent as a whole and of the oppressed classes, is the fact that an erosion may take place, with more and more people migrating to Protestant fundamentalist evangelical denominations, to new religious movements, to anti-clerical and atheist positions, and, particularly among the urban middle classes, to a kind of skeptical indifferentism. This process is already taking place where a majority of the episcopate and of the clergy still maintain a traditional conservative position. However, where an increasing number of bishops and priests are taking the side of the poor and of the oppressed becoming in Monsignor Romero's words "the voice of the voiceless" — the unity and the strength of the Church is recovering from this process of erosion.

CASANOVA: *The Vatican Council and the related process of "*aggiornamento*" opened up a lot of hopes and, at the same time, it transformed the Catholic conscience in priests as well as in laymen. When the hopes of greater internal transformation in the Church remain unfulfilled, there is a danger that those members most committed to the movement of reform, namely the radicals within the Church, may leave the Church and give up their religious commitment altogether. This was, for instance, a common trend in Spain in the 1970s. Is this trend continuing today or do you see a new trend in which people, in spite of unfulfilled hopes, continue fighting for the internal transformation of the Church?*

MADURO: I think that in Latin America today the second trend is predominant. I would add that unity within the Church is today, probably more than ever before, a blessing. People may have become more aware of it. In the *Summa Theologica*, Thomas Aquinas wrote that truth was a higher good than unity and that, if necessary, it was a moral obligation to sacrifice the unity of the Church for the sake of truth. Today the emphasis is upon maintaining the unity of the Church. Its enormous facility to divide may be one of the main shortcomings of the Protestant tradition. Anytime you disagree you can form your own congregation, without being perturbed by the feeling of having broken with God. The Catholic tradition, by contrast, stresses the need to maintain a strong unity within the community in order to have a strong contact with the transcendent. Progressive individuals and groups have come to realize that this unity may be much more important than we thought in the 1960s. In the unity of the Church we can see a prefiguration of the still unrealized unity of mankind, although most of the time it is only a caricature of it.

CASANOVA: *I would like you to evaluate the process of Catholic "*aggiornamento*." How would you interpret this process of Catholic transformation? To a certain extent, it was a Protestantification of Catholicism; it meant, at least, the end of the Counter-Reformation. How do you see the situation now? Which important goals of the process are already established and will be difficult to eradicate?*

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What are the shortcomings of the process so far? To a certain extent, it was a revolution from above, a sort of enlightened despotism. Perhaps we find ourselves in a situation in which the hierarchies are saying "we only wanted the process to go so far, we cannot go any further." The process, however, unleashed hopes and demands which perhaps can no longer be silenced. Do you think that the Church is going to be able to stop the process at will and even to retract some of the advances? In the last five years, there seems to have been an attempt at this direction.

MADURO: The *"aggiornamento,"* which was initiated by John XXIII, was a process with complex motives and causes. It unleashed, indeed, all kinds of previously latent processes within the Church which may otherwise not have developed. The process had various phases and even conflicting interpretations. Probably, for the majority of the European clergy, during the first years, the self-interpretation was that of adapting the Church to the modern world. The modern world, however, whether they knew it or not, was a capitalist world. Out of the Counciliar movement, however, there also came the acknowledgment that in the modern world there are oppressions, conflicts, injustices, violence, and so forth. Dormant forces against oppression, against imperialism, against capitalism, and against injustice in general began, as a result, also to awaken and grow, particularly in those regions of the Church in which oppression was a more relevant issue than modernizing the liturgy and adapting it to modern music, art, and the like. We may remember that during the first phases of the process in Latin America, the attitude of many who are today involved in the theology of liberation was very European. It implied spite for popular religiosity, in contrast to today's positive evaluation of the profoundly Christian and deeply liberating elements which are present in popular religiosity. In the 1960s, we thought that our task was that of updating the religiosity of the people, making it more rational, more intellectual, more sober, that is, more petty-bourgeois European or, if you wish, more Protestant. Where are we heading now? Many of the processes which were unleashed from the papacy of John XXIII to the Puebla conference are indeed not liked by many Church leaders, in Rome or in Latin America. Many bishops are reacting against some of the trends which are part of this process, trying to retrace them, to coopt them, to control them, or even to delegitimize and condemn them. We cannot foresee, of course, what is going to happen. Too many factors enter into the equation, including some which Marxists still find difficult to recognize, like the simple fact that a pope changing his mind or the arrival of a new pope with a different mentality may change the history of the Church. At least for the immediate future, however, recent trends point to a very difficult situation, because the conservative forces inside and outside of the Church are increasingly on the offensive.

CASANOVA: *In terms of the different interpretations and meanings of the Conciliar movement and of the process of Catholic transformation in general, we could perhaps use as ideal types the different positions represented by the Opus Dei and by the Jesuits. In recent years, there has been an internal conflict within the Church to decide which group is going to represent the avant-garde of the Church. The Opus Dei claims that the Vatican Council incorporated many elements which had been pioneered by the Opus Dei. The Opus Dei's model of modern, secular Catholicism is a kind of partial Protestantification of Catholicism which attempts to adapt Catholicism to certain aspects of modernity, while maintaining many of its traditional aspects. Most characteristic of the Opus Dei would be the propagation of a modern, secular, economic ethos among Catholic laymen which is, no doubt, functional for the modernization of Catholic societies. The case of Spain shows how the Opus Dei could play the role of a modernizing elite. The Opus Dei model can be characterized as an attempt to further instrumental rationalization, while maintaining the process of practical rationalization frozen at a traditional dogma, the traditional morals and the traditional hierarchic structures of the Church. In*

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this sense, it has elective affinities with a capitalist technocratic model of modernization. The Jesuits, at least lately, have represented an alternative, populist model of modernization which derives from the main document of the Vatican Council, "The Church in the World." The Church is portrayed here as "the people of God," as the community of the faithful. There is more stress on the populist aspect of the Church, as community, as assembly, as "ecclesia," than on the hierarchic structures of the institution. Rather than instrumental rationalization, the main goal of this model would be to expand all structures towards participation and universalization. Wojtyla's recent attempt to control the Jesuits seems to be connected with the populist role which the Jesuits have played, particularly in Latin America. Would you like to elaborate on these two models of Catholic modernization? Which of the two models, do you feel, is today gaining the upper hand in the Church? Apparently, Rome would prefer the Opus Dei type of modernization.

MADURO: There is not much I could add to your accurate description. It is true that the present Pope has given to the Opus Dei much more space within the Church than the previous three popes. One of the reasons may lie in his Polish Catholic background. The Polish Catholic tradition conveys a very strong respect for well organized, obedient, structured, modern, and anti-Communist groups within the Church. The ambiguity of this Pope resides in the fact that he is also identified with the working classes of his homeland. Since the oppressors in his country act in the name of socialism and Marxism, he is strongly anti-communist, anti-socialist, and anti-Marxist.

CASANOVA: *I think that if the Opus Dei model were to triumph, Catholicism could still serve to modernize Latin American societies in a technocratic-capitalist direction, whereas the traditional anti-capitalist Catholic resistance in Latin America, combined with the impulses unleashed by the Vatican Council could work towards a radically different model of Latin American modernization. In this sense, a lot may be at stake in this seemingly internal conflict between the Opus Dei and the Jesuits.*

THE VEXATION OF WEIL

by Jean Bethke Elshtain

Simone Weil is a vexation. An intellectual in the French Cartesian tradition who bore witness to her experience of Christ's presence (in November 1938); a radical who called "the destruction of the past . . . perhaps the greatest of all crimes";[1] a left-winger who penned trenchant critiques of Marxist thought and state socialist practice; a social theorist who condemned human collectives as a Great Beast yet yearned for a working class movement from "below;" Weil defies the usual categories. Embracing the role of outsider, she charted an almost perversely lonely course. Certain facts of her life, her mysticism, her apparent devotion to Catholicism (to which she never converted), a harsh asceticism that figured in her early death, prove stumbling blocks to many.

From the standpoint of bourgeois common sense, Weil seems morbid, a perturbed spirit haunting the terrible history of our century. To the orthodox Left, she is an apostate. In 1936, Trotsky articulated the orthodox position on Weil when he claimed that

1. Simone Weil, *The Need for Roots* (New York, 1979), p. 51.

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she had deserted "our cause," lost "faith in the proletariat and in Marxism," and had begun "to write absurd idealistic-psychological articles" defending "the idea of 'individuality.' " "Perhaps," he mused, "she will turn left again. But what's the use of talking about this any longer?"[2] To Staughton Lynd, in 1981, Weil is a thinker whose brave condemnation of Soviet repression and clear critique of Marxist messianism paved the way for "other non-conformist members of the left," including Albert Camus, C. Wright Mills, and E.P. Thompson.[3]

That the broad contours of Weil's discussion of bureaucracy and statism are familiar to us offers tacit recognition of how deeply the analysis she and other non-orthodox members of the French left proffered in the 1930s permeated our universe of political discourse. In three densely reasoned essays, "Are We Heading for the Proletarian Revolution?" published in 1933, and "An Analysis of Oppression" and "Sketch of Contemporary Social Life," both published in 1924, Weil launched a blistering critique of Soviet state socialism in particular and modern bureaucratic society in general:[4] "Instead of genuine freedom of the press, there is the impossibility of expressing free opinion, whether in the form of a printed, typewritten or hand-written document, or simply by word of mouth, without running the risk of being deported; instead of the free play between parties within the framework of the Soviet system, there is the cry of 'one party in power, and all the rest in prison'; instead of a communist party destined to rally together, for purposes of free co-operation, men possessing the highest degree of devotion, conscientiousness, culture, and critical aptitude, there is a mere administrative machine, a passive instrument in the hands of the secretariat."[5]

To appreciate this broadside, one must recall the context — the vacillations and bad faith within a broad segment of the French left on the matter of Stalinism.[6] Weil stripped away the euphemisms by which some were able to delude themselves as to the nature of the Soviet order. She remarks: "To call a state a workers' state when you go on to explain that each worker in it is put economically and politically at the complete disposal of a bureaucratic caste sounds like a bad joke."[7] Refusing the false solace embraced by some — that the Soviet Union was going through a temporary deformation en route to the socialist transformation and the completion of the revolutionary promise — Weil argued that Stalin's regime was no temporary derangement but "a different social mechanism."[8]

Weil parted company with mainstream liberal anti-communism, however, by insisting that the "social mechanism" which drew her ire could also be found, in less virulent form, in Western capitalist societies as well. We face "a new species of oppression, oppression exercised in the name of management."[9] Anti-democratic at base, the bureaucratic machine "tends, by its very structure, to concentrate all power in itself," threatening thereby individual liberty and values, "the very existence of everything that still remains precious for us in the bourgeois regime."[10] One finds this dynamic at work, for example, in the spread of Taylorism, "scientific management" of

2. Quoted in Simone Weil, *Oppression and Liberty* (Amherst, 1973), p. xi.
3. Staughton Lynd, "Marxism-Leninism and the Language of *Politics* Magazine: The First New Left . . . and the Third," in George Abbott White, *Simone Weil. Interpretations of a Life* (Amherst, 1981), p. 111.
4. All three essays are reprinted in Weil, *Oppression and Liberty, op.cit.*
5. *Ibid.*, pp. 3-4.
6. See the discussion in Herbert Lottman, *The Left Bank* (Boston, 1982).
7. *Oppression and Liberty, op.cit.*, p. 4.
8. *Ibid.*, p. 5.
9. *Ibid.*, p. 9.
10. *Ibid.*, p. 10

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production developed in the U.S. but adopted enthusiastically by Lenin for factory production in the Soviet Union. By breaking the productive process into minute parts in order to speed up and pacify workers, as well as increase productivity, Taylorism erodes human dignity no matter *who* owns the productive forces. Both Marxists and capitalists adhere to this cult of productivity. Man is more and more an appendage of the machine; exhausted and demeaned, the worker is more likely to submit than rebel.

The *particular* aberrations of Stalinism, then, highlight in dramatic form general forces at work — the "emancipation" not of human beings, but of productive forces; growing control by management and engineering elites; the reduction of workers to more and more passive roles; the uprooting of peoples and the destruction of traditions. "We are living in a world in which nothing is made to man's measure; there exists a monstrous discrepancy between man's body, man's mind and the things which at the present time constitute the elements of human existence; everything is disequilibrium."[11]

Weil's analysis of bureaucratic domination yields an extreme anti-statist stance. She rejects all modes of analysis and political doctrines that look toward the state or some "future perfect" vision of one for the completion or initiation of their agenda. In her view, there are no "good" and "bad" centralized states: *any* bureaucratically structured centralized state is a "powerful means of coercion"[12] that fills up and absorbs more social "space" as social life is planned, coordinated and rationalized.

Weil does, at times, distinguish explicitly between state societies which preserve room for individual dissent and political liberty and those that quash all such notions and possibilities. But she fears that one day the state, whether socialist or capitalist, will have flattened out all intermediary institutions and severed all non-instrumental social bonds. Facing the collective alone, the citizen will be compelled to reach for the state for there will be nothing else. "The state," she writes, "is a cold concern, which cannot inspire love, but itself kills, suppressing everything that might be loved; so one is forced to love it, because there is nothing else."[13] Inevitably, it will come down to this: in a society dominated by a state, the main task of administration and coordination will eventually devolve into war preparedness. A self-reinforcing dynamic will operate, for "every increase in the state's grip on economic life has the effect of orienting industrial life yet a little farther towards preparation for war; while, conversely, the ever-increasing demands occasioned by preparation for war help day by day to bring the all-round economic and social activities of each country more and more into subjection to the authority of the central power."[14]

Weil no doubt overstates her case and underplays historic and cultural variations in "statist" orders. But her negative critique retains much of its critical force in an age — our own — in which rationalization and social engineering have grown apace and the anti-democratic trajectory of the national security state seems immune to forces that would modify, curb, or modestly dismantle it. The potential for disciplinary control inherent in this top-heavy edifice draws into sharp focus those forces that Weil witnessed coalescing in the 1930s.

11. *Ibid.*, p. 108. Cf. the powerful discussion of work "set over against" the human person in John Paul II, "Laborem Exercens," or "On Human Work" (Boston, 1981).
12. *Ibid.*, p. 115.
13. *The Need for Roots, op.cit.*, p. 114. Weil sometimes fails to distinguish, sometimes confusingly distinguishes, state, nation, collectivity, community. Here her reference is clearly "the" state, the hegemonic centralized power in a nation-state society.
14. *Ibid.*, p. 116.

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Although Weil's anti-statist blasts resemble anarchist critiques of centralization of power, she differs from anarchism for she has no antagonism to authority (political, spiritual, cultural) as such. Indeed, she explicitly endorses hierarchism, order and obedience — as well as liberty, equality, and freedom of opinion — as intrinsic "needs" of the human soul and bases of social life — a mix anarchists would find contradictory. Weil's position has nothing of the "romantic" about it; she had no illusions that human beings might create a social order that is perfectly democratic and self-administering.

While liberals might indicate some measure of agreement with Weil's fears of centralized power, they could not share her argument's deep structure. For Weil proposes a powerful alternative to Whiggish history and to the classical liberal view that portrays tyrannical traditional authority giving way to free consent. Having got rid of the authority of kings and priests, and having broken the shackles of "irrational" modes of authority in all its forms, liberalism, through consent, gives birth to a civil society in which legitimate authority inheres in the collective and is no longer lodged in specific persons. Weil finds the fruits of this project problematic. Rather than flourishing republics, we face an abstract society, justified by tacit consent, governed increasingly by what Hannah Arendt once called "no-body": authority *without* a human face.

An argument along Weil's lines — that bureaucratic forms and the centralized state corrode other social institutions and relations and eviscerate political entities beneath the level of the state — can take radical and conservative directions. Radical and conservative analysts might concur broadly in a description of the phenomenology of statist society, yet differ in their explanations of the emergence of that society and in their political prescriptions for treating ever more sophisticated forms of domination. There is grist for a number of theoretical mills in Weil's indictment of statism. This suggests, minimally, that anti-statism does not fall neatly into a left-right divide. It is likely that both conservative restorationists and radical democrats might find support for particular features of their respective positions in Weil's dismantling of bureaucratic centralization.

Holding that the nodal point of state centralization signifies, by its very existence, a collapse in the proper order of things, Weil insists that the "whole problem of politics comes to this: to find, in conditions as they are, a form of society that would conform to the demands of reason."[15] What those demands are, and what "reason" requires, should come into focus as I proceed. At present, Weil insists, modern man inverts the moral order by proclaiming as universal and eternal that which is conventional and in flux. God is supplanted with abstract schemes for earthly justice, and we worship that which we have become: Plato's Great Beast, the social collective. Our love for this collective is another perversion, a falling away from supernatural love. Increasingly, we conform ourselves to the "enormous animal," the Beast. Weil's formulations here may put one off, but they do suggest that her alternative order will be one that reflects and is open to emanations of supernatural truth and justice. This aesthetic ideal is Platonic in its broad force and in its cosmological inspiration.

Weil contrasts her Platonic vision sharply to the "hope" proffered by Marxist doctrine. Although Marxism proclaims itself the final solution to our present derangements, in fact it is a powerful symptom of the disorder. Marx — and Marxism — are not exempt from the "most ill-founded superstitions" of the day, including "the cult of production, the cult of big industry, the blind belief in progress."[16] The scien-

15. Simone Weil, *Lectures on Philosophy* (Cambridge, 1978), p. 129. Weil understands "reason" in a formalistic, Cartesian sense here, as a kind of mathematical certainty.

16. *Oppression and Liberty, op.cit.,* p. 48.

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tism and historicism through which the Marxist faith enunciates its truths are, in fact, "superstitions." Truth, for Weil, is available to us *only* if our souls are in their proper relationship to that God whose grace is the singular source of authentic value.

If one takes up the question of human work — its current degradation and its possible transformation — the difference between Marxism and Weil's theory comes into clearer focus. The wage labor the Marxist calls alienated, Weil construes as desacralized, hence stripped of meaning. The worker, as a result, lacks a dignity which is a value of the spiritual order. Crushed and manipulated by great social forces, he becomes part of the Beast. Marxism only deepens this disorder when it proclaims its abstract "proletariat" and promotes the notion that the workers as a collective have a scientifically certified historic task. Nothing changes in work-*life*, she continues, but workers are caught in fluctuations of arrogance and disillusionment that false promises of revolution promote; moreover, this collective, this massified "we," undermines the possibility that workers might, *from themselves,* as a community not a collective, become a force for change in the direction of more cooperative social life. This latter hope, in contrast to the apotheosis of the collective entailed in the category "proletariat," *must* begin with an *a priori*: an affirmation of the inherent and inalienable dignity of the human soul as a transcendental value. For Weil, this project is a concrete option available to each individual subject.

It may be well, at this point, to remember that Weil also finds capitalist and liberal society grounded in a reversal of the right order of things. Capitalism, too, constitutes individuals as a consuming and producing collective and unleashes social desires and hopes it cannot fulfill. The inevitable disillusionment that follows may "require" further tightening of the noose of social control and an extension of the sway of administration. In this way, the false gods before whom we bow down increasingly threaten to crush us. Presaging Foucault's depiction of the "carceral society," modern life as a tangled web of surveillance and control mechanisms, covert and overt, Weil tells a tale of the history of force rather than singing a song of progress. Repudiating the Marxist belief that each epoch gives way to its own suppression and that a victory over domination is (at some point) certain, Weil's is a stringently disillusioned view.

Weil portrays early man "handed over weak and naked to all the blind forces that make up the universe." Over time, "the power which keeps him on his knees has been as it were transformed . . . to the human society of which he is a member."[17] Man cannot escape definition by that which enslaves him. Reaching for a theory of power that does not require a *bête noir*, with a universal group of oppressors holding sway over a universal group of oppressed, Weil repudiates the category of "oppression" itself as it is usually understood. She writes: "The notion of oppression is, in short, a stupidity . . . . And the notion of an oppressive class is even more stupid. We can only speak of an oppressive structure of society."[18] Power, in her view, is not a top-down relation but an immanent force. In a world of force, man becomes means and power supplants all other ends. The victim of force is complicit in his or her degradation; hence, there can be no assurance that he will "use force justly if it is put into his hands."[19] Weil's picture of the power system is so total there seems little or no space for renewal or dissent. After all, she cannot "call to arms" a reserve army of the *Weltgeist,* having rejected the "proletariat" and, by implication, all other collective visions of a historic "subject." Yet, the very idea of an oppressive system entailing, as it does, notions of imposition, domination, constriction, presupposes the possibility of (greater) freedom. That is,

17. *Ibid.,* p. 79.
18. Simone Weil, *Gravity and Grace* (New York, 1979), p. 212.
19. *Ibid.,* p. 55.

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one can condemn a particular historic formation as a machine of coercion and control *only* because one endorses, explicitly or implicitly, some contrasting ideal of a less restrictive scheme of things. But Weil's alternative is unpersuasive.

Within the web of her remorseless logic, the (socialist) revolution emerges, *not* as the historic alternative to capitalism but as its double. Each requires the other. The "revolution," brought into existence by capitalism, shares its historic and conceptual ground, thus offering no genuine hope for a rightly ordered social world. Weil writes: "It is often said that the situation is objectively revolutionary, and that all that is lacking is the 'subjective factor'; as if the complete absence of that very force which alone could transform the system were not an objective characteristic of the present situation, whose origin must be fought in the structure of our society! That is why the first duty the present period imposes on us is to have enough intellectual courage to ask ourselves if the term 'revolution' is anything else but a name, if it has any precise content, if it is not simply one of the numerous lies produced by the capitalist system in its rise to power."[20] Revolution is a *façon de parler,* lacking substance. Renewal, if it is to come, must involve a radical re-location of the self in relation to the supernatural and social orders. Weil, remember, locates the modern subject in a tangle of illusions and social deformations, signified by the wholesale delivery of humanity over to a vast "machine for breaking hearts and crushing spirits."[21] This social machine cannot "stop grinding . . . no matter in whose hand" it may be. State socialism and bureaucratic capitalism are the Tweedledee and Tweedledum of uprootedness, oppression, and disequilibrium.

Where, then, is the space for hope? Weil contends that those who function as parts of the machine, assimilated to history and production, might yet become a source for change, not as a *collective* but as Kantian subjects open to pure noumenal reality. Weil's "essentially active" subject is not the human being in all his or her aspects but in a "faculty of self-determination" and an abstract intelligence she privileges. *This* faculty, having transcendent status, cannot be renounced or destroyed save through death; hence, every victory by force or power "contains within itself the germ of a possible defeat."[22] Power may go so far as to exterminate the subject, but this is self-defeating, wiping out its own object. Power cannot, by definition, eliminate the transcendental dimension of the subject. Human rootedness, therefore, the alternative to modern dislocation and alienating force, can only grow from an affirmation of our noumenal being that shatters the false realm of appearances. Weil locates the ground out of which social transformation might emerge *solely* on the spiritual plane. "Rootedness lies in something other than the social,"[23] she decrees. "We must be rooted in the absence of a place."[24] We must, in fact, uproot ourselves from our location in unreal appearances in order to open ourselves to the reality of unchanging truths. True Justice — capitalized— is a supernatural virtue which descends from God to human beings in moments of grace.

The notion of uprooted rootedness may appear impossibly paradoxical, but it flows logically from Weil's prior commitment to cosmology that is essentially Platonic, an epistemology indebted to Kant's phenomenal-noumenal split, and a severely Manichean metaphysic.[25] I cannot trace her argument in detail. But what is most striking in

20. *Ibid.,* p. 39.
21. *Ibid.,* p. 108.
22. *Ibid.,* p. 67.
23. *Ibid.,* p. 222.
24. *Ibid.,* p. 86.
25. The dramatically different metaphysic and epistemology of early Christian doctrine is detailed, eloquently, in two books: Margaret R. Miles, *Fullness of Life* (Philadelphia, 1981) and

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Weil's "positive vision" is her failure to draw the earthly and the divine, *physis and nomos,* freedom and necessity together in any compelling way. Her dualism severs the human from the divine and the body from the spirit so starkly there is no coherent way, within her frame, for human beings to locate themselves in particular bodies, or as a social body, in history. In line with her Gnostic repudiation of the material world, "matter" is maligned. The human body, for example, is a stumbling block, a barrier to be overcome, an alien entity to be chastened until such time — death — as it is cast off and only the pure fragment of the transcendent soul remains to enjoy an ongoing existence.

Weil's political theory mirrors her metaphysic, including a theism in which God sits at the *point d'appui* of an aesthetically ordered cosmology. Wholly outside historic time (an implicit rejection of incarnational doctrine), God is Good. He is also absent, far removed from the lowly stuff of created matter. "There is every degree of distance between the creature and God. A distance where the love of God is impossible. Matter, plants, animals. Here, evil is so complete that it destroys itself."[26] From her early Cartesian formulas that "proved" God's existence through geometrical theorems, to her mature view of a God absent from the world, Weil's theism is terribly abstract and "pure." Weil's theism must take this Gnostic form — with God placed "at an infinite distance" — for she must "conceive of him as innocent of evil" and the material world itself embodies evil.[27] The world is given over to necessity, and human beings, cast into time and space, are separated from unity with God. Yet, this abstract Good intervenes in the "souls" of thinking beings insofar as the eternal part of the soul may mingle with it. The irrational or lesser aspect of the soul is non-eternal and doomed to nothingness.

In common with a Platonic metaphysic, then, Good and necessity are infinitely separated and have nothing in common. In line with Gnostic doctrines, the created material universe is disparaged. What emerges is an aesthetic order, unsullied by corporeality at its apogee, lowly and "evil" at its base. This metaphysic, in turn, yields a vision of the subject who breathes air far too rarefied to sustain a life lived among others. For example, Weil insists that all bonds of affection and necessity between human beings must either be transformed "supernaturally" into (aim-inhibited) friendship or remain impure and of a lower order. This is far too disdainful of the whole realm of necessity to locate us as either social or historic beings. Weil disassociates her affirmation of the subject too sharply from the actual experience of human life as lived, of what it means to be in a social location, not as one of the spiritual elite but as an imperfect human being in a concrete place. Hobbled by a rupture between the earthly and the spiritual, Weil cannot constitute any ground for social being. Instead, she posits a radically solitary vision of a self severed from constitutive attachments to concrete others, a place, a history.

In her posthumously published *L'Enracinement,* a book left unfinished at her death in 1943 (the English title is *The Need for Roots*), Weil sets forth dogmatically, if unsystematically, her picture of the "roots" of the human condition and the "good" to which human societies might aspire. She aimed to recover for her people their identities as French men and women insofar as France could be said to embody supernatural values. Yet, at the same time, she severs the ordinary citizen from any duty or obligation to the collective. She rejects nearly all forms of association. Yet she calls upon workers to seek change "from below" through cooperative participation. Only in community (as opposed to collectivity) is it possible for transcendent meaning and purpose to become instantiated as each worker recognizes, in a radically autonomous sense,

Peter Brown, *The Cult of the Saints. Its Rise and Function in Latin Christianity* (Chicago, 1982

26. *Gravity and Grace, op.cit.,* p. 130.

27. *Ibid.,* p. 162.

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each other as a Kantian end-in-himself. This, she insists, is a prior step to forging a community.

But what makes the worker who he is — his ties to family and place, the markers of his particular regional and occupational identity, and so on — are for Weil a stumbling block to radical autonomy. Staughton Lynd is correct to appreciate Weil's insistence that democracy requires a powerful affirmation of the person and of individual dignity. But Weil's own understanding of the human subject disassociates this affirmation so sharply from living experience that her wider political vision is derailed before it even gets on the track.

The problem here is not, as some would have it, Weil's embrace of mysticism or her theism *per se*, but the *substance* of her theology. An appreciation of Weil's theism and the particulars of her mature metaphysic help us to make sense of her social and political judgments and, at the same time, demonstrate the inadequacies of her project for contemporary critical discourse and democratic politics. What is striking is how heavily Weil is indebted to classical philosophic anthropology, a hierarchy on top of which perched the rational soul, and to later Gnostic disparagements of the body, and how little she draws upon early Christian theology and doctrine. She bypasses the anthropological presumptions that flow from the doctrines of creation, incarnation, and the resurrection of the body — and which created a conceptual Copernican revolution in their time — in favor of both older formulations and Manichean dualisms. Thus, she cannot draw together the spheres of freedom and necessity, nor link the human community to the divine as could early Christian and contemporary Catholic social doctrine.[28]

The point here is to suggest that Christian social thought offers possibilities for grounding human social rootedness not available to Weil, though she is never wholly candid about the depth of her repudiation of this alternative anthropology and the very different social and political evaluations it yields. This criticism is another of the many footnotes to the long history of discourse pitting Plato against Aristotle, Augustine against Aquinas, Kant against Hegel and Marx. It also helps us to make sense of Weil's flirtation with Catholicism — a relationship that was never consummated. It strikes me that Weil's anti-materialism and dualism created an unbridgeable gulf between her metaphysic and that of Catholicism, just as her radically solitary personalism is at odds with Catholic communalism. Her attraction to Catholicism seems to have been primarily aesthetic. This is evident in her advice to teachers on how to discuss Christianity with children: "it is so beautiful that it must surely contain much that is true."[29]

Is there any way to rescue Weil's project? Her positive theory is too abstracted and etherealized to serve as the ground for social theory. Her affirmation of the dignity of the human person requires a very different grounding from her own, one more historical and worldly. Her too-lofty spiritual subject must be brought down to earth and embodied. For the human subject is always a corporeal being in a particular place and time and none other. The basis of an alternative to Weil's radical "I-Thou" metaphysic must lie in a social ontology which forges links (or allows us to) between and among human beings. Recognition of our essential sociality (i.e., that for a being to *be*, indeed to *become* human, he or she cannot be posited outside the frame of a human network)

28. The "best place" to look for Catholic social doctrine remains the great "social encyclicals": *Laborem Exercens, op.cit., Mater et Magistra* and *Pacem in Terris*, both of which appear in John XXIII, *The Encyclicals and Messages (Washington, D.C., 1964), among others.*

29. Quoted in Simone Pétrement's biography, *Simone Weil. A Life* (New York, 1976), p. 499.

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becomes, in turn, a basis for the solidarity and communality Weil desires but can neither attain nor sustain. The ordinary social world, in this non-Weilian view, is not a Great Beast but the ground of our being, for better or worse.

Within the frame of theological discourse, the challenge is to preserve a sacral dimension or "moment" as constitutive of human subjects and their world. One must begin with a view of the material world as essentially good. That is, Weil's project of human dignity is better served by a theology that enables us to see the divine *in* the human, the spiritual in the material, the transcendent in the immanent. This runs counter to Weil's view that divine reality or spiritual force can "never be identified with the human."[30] Weil's asceticism, which forced her into an extreme repudiation of the body, is not required by Christian social thought but is very much demanded within neo-Platonist and Gnostic formulations.

By severing the subject from his or her embodiment, and the individual from a social body, Weil paradoxically constitutes us as beings more, not less, subject to demands from an importunate bureaucratic order. Robust social loyalties and affections, an untidy but flourishing "body political and social," are the only coherent locus for resistance over time. Individual acts of heroism and supererogation leave behind repositories of courage and idealism, but, if individuals are to claim their inherent dignity and to situate it in social forms, they must do so as a community. In the beginning is the body, not the Word. We are never not our bodies. What body is Weil denying? The argument, then, both to reclaim Weil and to criticize her, is that when the body is denied, when the appetitive part of the soul is repudiated altogether, one suppresses part of one's self. Perhaps more importantly, Weil, along with other latter-day Manicheans, denies the procreative female body. Yet, if the terms of our politics and discourse are to shift from the necromancy Weil so unerringly signals to some alternative that promises hope and action, our reigning metaphor must be that of natality, of birth.[31]

Hannah Arendt argued that Greek antiquity, worshipped by Weil and celebrated by Arendt herself, nevertheless ignored "two essential characteristics of human existence" — faith and hope. Yet, Arendt continues: "The miracle that saves the world, the realm of human affairs, from its normal, 'natural' ruin is ultimately the fact of natality, in which the faculty of action is ontologically rooted. It is, in other words, the birth of new men and the new beginning, the action they are capable of by virtue of being born. Only the full experience of this capacity can bestow upon human affairs faith and hope .... It is this faith in and hope for the world that found perhaps its most glorious and most succinct expression in the few words with which the Gospels announced their 'glad tidings': 'A child has been born unto us. Weil recognized the "need for roots" yet left her subject peculiarly unrooted. Drawing upon her recognition of the destructive pain of uprootedness, one can construct an alternative that builds upon her insights. Weil reminds us that human beings are always vulnerable and that they can be destroyed. Against the statist idols of her time, she hurled the challenge of a meticulous conscience. That Weil is so difficult a figure — a vexation — may be because she just does not fit. That most of us most of the time do, quite comfortably, represents (she would say) both individual tragedy and historic triumph. But her "way out" leaves far too many behind. We must find some other way. That Weil invites such critical reflection is a tribute to the power with which she propounds her complex but finally unsatisfactory political theology.

30. Richard P. McBrien, "Roman Catholicism: E Pluribus Unum," *Daedalus*, Vol. III ((Winter 1982), p. 77.

31. Hannah Arendt, *The Human Condition* (Chicago, 1958), p. 247.

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FROM FUNDAMENTALISM TO TELEVANGELISM

by Tim Luke

The rebirth of Christian fundamentalism in the U.S. since 1945 must be acknowledged as a key shift in the post-World War II American political scene. Every president from Truman to Reagan, in one way or another, has recognized the power of Christian symbolism and values as a legitimating animus for the *Pax Americana* underwritten across the globe by American technology, military force, and culture. While Christian religiosity figured prominently in the classic republican myths of America's Puritan founding and its divine writ of manifest destiny, the U.S. did not officially pledge itself to be "one nation, under God," or collectively in "In God We Trust," until the mid-1950s, following congressional action in the age of Ike and Senator McCarthy.

This revitalization of Christian (meaning mainly a vague generic Protestant credo) faith can be traced to several sources: the economic crises of the 1930s, the destructiveness of World War II, the rise of "atheistic" communism in Eastern Europe and Asia, and the massive cultural shocks induced in the 1940s and 1950s by nuclear arms, television, regional migration, suburbanization, and the consumer economy. Under these pressures, and despite the reputed "end of ideology" in this era, a diverse and deep reawakening of religious faith spread throughout American society, cutting across class divisions, racial groups, geographical regions, and many denominational lines.

Contemporary analyses of this religious revival and, in particular, the rise of Christian fundamentalism, differ sharply over its social significance and political implications. One interpretation associates the reborn fundamentalists, in some organized sects and persuasions, with the quasi-fascist, right-wing underside of American populism. Another view asserts that Christian fundamentalism, in other sects and groups, sided significantly with progressive forces in the post-war struggles for civil rights, nuclear disarmament, and human rights in Third World societies. Evidence can be cited in favor of both outlooks. At this juncture, however, the depth and diversity of this latest "great awakening" stands in the way of making any final judgments on these issues.

Yet, in the context of this debate, a number of troubling issues have emerged with this rebirth of Christian fundamentalism, particularly since the 1960s, as the severe cultural contradictions contained in consumer-driven corporate capitalism often challenged a "Christian" way of life. As the consumer society of advanced American capitalism displaced the traditional social ties of the nation's diverse regional cultures, corporate producers and mass advertising in the 1940s and 1950s presented individuals with vast new arrays of pre-processed behavioral scripts and commodity packages. Equipped with these correctly encoded scripts and given access in the marketplace to the attractively packaged commodities of modern life, individuals were enjoined to eschew their autonomous producership for dependent consumership and clientage. And, in exchange for the destruction of their traditional identities, community, and freedoms in consumer society, advertising and corporate capital urged consumers to find a new identity, society, and emancipation in the accumulation of commodities, the practice of stylized scripts, and the consumption of professional services.

Through television, radio, and movies, which became the primary technologies for

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managing mass consumption, corporate producers urged consumers to base their identities on their Buicks, find community in those rock-and-roll classics of the 60s, and gain emancipation in the enjoyment of their favorite cigarettes, beer, and soft drinks. Values, meaning, and purpose no longer were communicated through the intricate rituals of the family, neighborhood, church, or workplace. Instead, advertising, the electronic media and mass publications assigned vital new meanings to commodities, values to the symbolically enriched packages of material life, and purposes to the conventionalized scripts of personal improvement in advanced capitalism. At the same time, as the consumer and his corporate cultivation became the primary productive force in the new advanced capitalist base, new forms of consumerist superstructure emerged from the electronic vacuum of mass media. In response to this consumer culture, an electronic church, a tele-evangelism or consumerist confession, developed in "religious programming" from the electronic mediation of reborn Christian fundamentalism. In the codes of consumer culture, corporate capital successfully has transposed even religious faith into an *audio-visual cult*, deriving its form and substance from the same master codes of consumption endlessly reproduced in "secular" programming, which celebrates a theology not of personal liberation but rather of collective integration.

Still, a clear distinction must be drawn between the televangelists, who have gained increasing visibility and influence over the past 30 years, and any previous "great awakening" of American religiosity as well as many Christian fundamentalists alive today, who come to their faith authentically in rural backwoods churches, ramshackle chapels on the wrong side of the tracks, or revival tents at the county fairgrounds. In these latter instances, a strong case can be made that fundamentalism, as Marx once observed, is still the sigh of the oppressed creature, providing solace to the last outsiders, the real losers, and the truly oppressed through the opiates of religious ritual. With regard to the audio-visual cults of televangelism, however, an equally strong case can be made that these mass-marketed devotions are the sigh of the confused consumers. The major televangelists, who are following their ministries in the mass media, like Jim and Tammy Bakker of the *PTL* (Praise the Lord) *Club,* Pat Robertson of the *700 Club,* Robert Schuller and his *Hour of Power,* Jerry Falwell of the *Old-Time Gospel Hour*, and Oral Roberts of *Oral Roberts*, all spread the uppers of success, healing, and fulfillment to those many troubled, upwardly mobile people who are going through "tough times" in the corporate marketplace. Their adherents, except for the truly faithful in the studio audiences, experience their epiphanies electronically, coming to their faith artificially after flipping the channels through the morning gameshows, the afternoon soaps, and the evening sitcoms.

Fundamentalism as a Consumption Community

These tendencies toward developing an audio-visual cult, defined almost wholly in the meta-codes of commodification used in corporate capitalist society, are the troubling issues posed by Christian televangelical fundamentalism. In the society of spectacle, as it has formed from the standardized scripts of teleplays and the pleasing packages of the electronic marketplace, the intense significance of communal belief can be quickly reduced to an extensive sign-system of personal consumption in passive, isolated watching.

An ineffable god, the unknown mysteries or limitless good simply cannot be contemplated, revered, or celebrated in a society of bureaucratically controlled consumption. The electronic mediations of Christian fundamentalism must destroy these auras of faith in order to produce an electronic image. Animation, cosmic soundscores,

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computergraphics, or telegenic talking heads all can and will make limitless good a light-show image, the mysterious unknown a haunting rift of organ or synthesizer chords, and the ineffable godhead an uplifting cartoon animation. The codes of televisionary ministries, in that television is the consumption experience *par excellence,* necessarily must attractively package and completely commodify even the Divine to integrate effectively an unseen, diverse, and passive audience.

During the 1950s and 1960s, an entire generation came of age in the U.S. under the horizon of a mass media-borne corporate culture. Electronic images constructed communities via videotape delay across four time zones. Carefully coded video morality plays assigned new meanings to the conventionalized scripts of everyday life. Incessant commercial messages cued consumers, young and old, into the "really important things in life." Following Durkheim, then, it is not surprising that televangelical fundamentalism is an alienated projection of corporate consumer society reflected back to itself as electronic imagery. Thus, average American consumers, as they matured and sought to know God, flipped the channel from *Mister Rogers' Neighborhood* to *Oral Roberts,* quit the *Mickey Mouse Club* to join the *700 Club,* and dropped *Ted Mack's Amateur Hour* to tune in to Jerry Falwell's *Old-Time Gospel Hour.* In consumer society, Jesus or God, like Wonder Bread or Geritol, is sold telegenically as healing bodies, mending lives, renewing health, and changing attitudes. Faith is presented as a piece of the rock, going to the source, and reaching out to touch someone. As this system of bureaucratically controlled consumption has slowly colonized the everyday lifeworld of American consumers, the cross has followed trade and the flag to imperialize its domain in the electromagnetic consciousness of contemporary society.

In these electronic churches, the aura of faith, the intense spirit of communion and the shared consciousness of humanity's transcendent ends or original sins are effaced in the mass media's consumerist communication. The institution of services or worship devolves into watching a breezy Christian talkshow, complete with gospel rock interludes, man on the street interviews, and in-depth reports on the vital issues facing Christians today. Likewise, the codes of consumerism reduce the clergyman or reverend to an amiable quizmaster, a talkshow host, or flashy showman. Confession, communion, conversion are redefined as calling a Christian phonebank, finding God's mission for oneself in selling more used cars, and slapping a PTL Club, 700 Club, or Moral Majority bumper sticker on one's diesel truck trailer. The word of God is conveniently packaged on ten audio cassettes for the convert/consumer's personal enjoyment in his car, on his Walkman, or out in the workshop. Even Calvary is recreated on videotape for constant broadcast throughout the viewing day as an admonition to televangelical viewers to "get to know Jesus," in accord with the same code of product promotion that sells laxatives, the prevention of forest fires, and more life insurance.

It appears that no substantive system of values completely can escape commodification in the society of corporate-planned consumption. Worship, reverence, and devotion as such are repackaged electronically into *special events* rather than as *habitual practices.* These events, in turn, fit into the corporate society of spectacle as telecast or teleprompted rallies, crusades, conferences, and revivals that can be mass marketed like the Superbowl and passively experienced on endless rebroadcast. Televangelism, then, necessarily transforms its sect into a market, its believers into consumers, and its message into products. An entire industry of Christian products, services, and merchandisers springs forth from televangelism inasmuch as it markets Jesus as a product that works and God as a service that delivers. Hence, the major televangelists are continually promoting their message, program and image in an endless telethon, soliciting contributions, pledges, and financial support to spread their gospel.

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The cross, the dove, the fish and Jesus are no longer merely icons or holy symbols; they are mass-marketed insignia of Christian consumption. Indeed, in the "K-Mart Kultur" of corporate capitalism, these signs mark the boundaries of only one segment in corporate capital's evolving master code of product demography. As the drug culture must have its marijuana leaf T-shirts, coke spoons and roach clips, or the suburban gentry must acquire its preppie wardrobe, squash racquets and barbecues, Christian televangelists must have their expensive bibles, Christian greeting cards and lithograph of Jesus for the living room. The consumption of these objects, or "Christian supplies," gives the televangelicals their identity, society and meaning in the correctly coded conventions of telecast consumerism. Just as "country music" is now merely a genre of commodities — produced in the city of Nashville, packaged in the full array of high Hollywood hype, and promoted in a massive Madison Avenue fashion — so too is fundamental Christian faith devolving into a standardized kit of signs, services and symbols devoid of much original substance. Clearly, cowboys, woodsmen and farmers no longer produce "country music" in the society of spectacle; therefore, it is not surprising that audio technicians, teleprompter operators and studio producers now produce the commodified electronic surrogate for devotional services. Televangelism, in the last analysis, is "lite religion," just like "real religion" only better, because it is less filling and even more satisfying.

With this syncretic fusion of a ministry with marketing, televangelists openly act, talk and dress like entertainment stars or corporate salesmen. The three generic codes of Christian programming cast their content in the form of an afternoon talkshow, like the *700 Club* or the *PTL Club*; a low-budget variety show with well-known stars, musical groups and talented soloists, like the *Old-Time Gospel Hour* or *Day of Discovery*; or, a dignified public service announcement, like *Oral Roberts* or *It is Written.* These programs totally diverge from established service broadcasts from old-line churches, like the *Lutheran Hour* or *Mass for Shut-ins.* In televangelical programming, the televangelist is a star, working to sell his or her line of "power passages," "Championship of Christ," or "healing through faith." The program's object is to build audience share, gain contributions and create a need for the "faith products" marketed in images, telephone hot-lines and special literature. Traditional churches' denominational liturgies, arcane rituals or theological doctrines often are derided as worthless, obsolete or ineffective. All that counts is the video-viewers' continuing "faith" in the televangelist, expressed in watching the program and pledging monetary support to the unending telethon of the ministry.

In keeping with this logic, televangelists build broadcasting/production studios, not churches. Instead of forming synods, wards or bishoprics, electronic evangelists organize the Christian Broadcasting Network and Liberty Broadcasting System. The word of God no longer arrives to every generation on the wings of angels or in the infrequent manifestation of miracles. Rather, the imperatives of televangelical market-building assure that the word of God arrives daily in the homes of millions from a CBN satellite and that Miracle Day is a permanent feature of televangelical broadcasts in order to celebrate new conversions to the fold. Likewise, each televangelist, as a star, directs the behavior and values of his share of the fundamentalist audience through the codes of entertainment marketing. Their constant orchestration of conversions, healings and testimonials for their viewers' edification, in turn, meshes perfectly with the corporate-based code of telegenic proof, which also shows consumers switching decisively from one deodorant to another; gaining quick relief from packaged nostrums; and swearing the new, improved product worked for them.

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If Christian fundamentalism was merely an audio-visual cult thriving only on the distant margins of contemporary society, then it might be safely ignored. However, the pure professionalism of its most persuasive packages has garnered televangelism considerable support. In the society of corporate-controlled consumption, the marketplace becomes a voting booth. Popular packages and products win votes of favor in their consumption by increasing numbers of isolated, passive consumers, seeking to signal the proper sign meanings to others. The growth of televangelism's following, and the sophistication of its special events management, like 1983 being declared the "Year of the Bible" by President Reagan, indicates an important ideological role of televangelical fundamentalism that needs to be examined in more detail.

Televangelism as an Ideological Force

The unique position of televangelical fundamentalism in contemporary American society is expressive of the cultural contradictions of corporate capitalism. Everyone in the 1950s did not immediately or completely subscribe to the new consumer ethic of the advanced corporate economy — particularly those Christian fundamentalists who found satisfaction in televangelism. The real insiders of American society, or the mainstream participants in middle class culture, who had enough income, status or leisure, did shift their identities and purpose from being producers to consumers. At the same time, the national planning of the federal welfare state and the transnational productivity of corporate capital worked, throughout the 1950s and 1960s, to include as many groups, interests and subcultures as was organizationally possible. Hence, as Bell observes, a major contradiction erupted in the cultural underpinnings of American society. While the traditional productivity of American industry assumed the unquestioning adherence of its workers and consumers to the frugal discipline of the Protestant ethic, the new model of corporate consumer society demanded a headlong leap into the unrestrained hedonism of the psychedelic bazaar, rising from the commodities in the corporate marketplace. The traditional culture's injunction to all to "wait for their just rewards" was replaced by an electronic call for everyone to "go for the gusto." Yet, in urging consumers to pursue their consuming fantasies in the short run, the long-run productive potential of the American economy may have suffered as capital, technology, expertise and labor were channeled into personal leisure and consumption.

As the consumer society of post-war American unfolded, an entirely new industrial infrastructure — tied to knowledge-intensive informational production — and an unprecedented national culture — knitted together by CBS, NBC, ABC, interstate highways and AM-FM radio — formed along with these underlying cultural contradictions. Yet, the old moral verities, nationalistic virtues and optimistic values that the America of puritan producers held to be true prior to the rise of consumer society doggedly held on among the most marginal elements of mainstream society. Either as aspirants to the attractions of consumerist leisure or as poorly adjusted parvenu participants in suburban consumption, these semi-outsider/semi-insider elements are the most familiar followers of the televangelists' electronic churches. Working in industrial parks scattered around interstate highway interchanges, the agri-business tracts of the Sunbelt states or the regional shopping malls dotting modern urban sprawl, these people turn to televangelism for the credo of success, healing and faith in old-fashioned values that it exalts.

Christ, these parvenus are told by televangelism, chooses a mission or ministry for us all; hence, televangelists assure their viewers that Jesus or God wants *them* to *be* aerospace workers, truckdrivers, check-out girls, salesmen or hog growers. Similarly, the

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consumer goods, promotions, good health or financial prosperity these *arriviste* consumers acquire is all part of "a master plan for life" because they are "young champions of Christ." In a society of bureaucratically controlled consumption, the have-not followers of televangelism consume their scripts of faith and packages of success as downpayments on having material commodities for consumption. God, in turn, creates miracles that usually are expressed in getting, having or keeping the most sought after goods of the corporate marketplace. At the same time, however, subscribing to televangelism also can provide pre-paid spiritual care for the tough times of life. Here, the televangelists recognize that consumer society excites individuals to buy too much, to play too many games or to go too far in personal pleasures. Unable to cope, these poorly adjusted consumers need the guidance, solace and hope that only Jesus or God can give. Through telecast counsel, phonebank prayers or pre-recorded audio cassettes, televangelists intervene electronically in their viewers' lives to act as psychosocial therapists.

Yet, the message of these sessions on "The Christian Family," "God, Sex and Marriage," or "Divorce, Remarriage and Faith" is that of discipline, sacrifice, success and work. Pleasures are allowed, but not the unlimited, unchecked, unbalanced pursuit of any pleasures anytime. Such advice is the work of secular humanists, pornographers and abortionists aiming to break up the traditional American family and destroy its economic prosperity. To counter the commodified utopias of corporate capital in beer, automobile, perfume and soft drink ads, televangelical therapy projects its own commodified utopias of happy families, secure finances, growing faith and Christian living to its viewers in consumer society. Ironically, however, even these invocations to work harder with more Christian discipline are vended electronically to the televangelical viewers in consumerist advertising codes.

As an ideological force, then, televangelism constitutes itself as a disciplined response to the cultural contradictions of capitalism. Having seen the collective crises of consumer society explode in the 1960s and 1970s, televangelists electronically advocate a rediscovery of the good old days of the 1940s and 1950s, prior to the 1960s psychedelic bazaar, when women knew their proper role, blacks stayed in their place, men wore the pants in the family, kids were not on dope, the Japanese exported low-quality goods, the U.S. was Number One, and things just overall worked. While much of this image is myth, CBN reinforces it by broadcasting only old 1950s sitcoms and 1940s cowboy movies. In such electronic texts, the video-consumer does not suffer the obscenity of Lucy and Ricky Ricardo sleeping in the same bed, but rather can celebrate the glory of Randolph Scott blowing away ten Commanches without reloading his six-gun. The televangelists' response to the artificial revolution of "sex, drugs and rock and roll" begun in the 1960s is to mount an equally artificial counter-revolution against the corporate capitalist organizers and national welfare state planners that aided and abetted these crises of the past two decades.

Consequently, in the early 1980s, the ideological importance of televangelism interlocks directly and dangerously with the right-wing revival of the Reagan era. Having packaged recent history as a series of dismal failures that are attributable to a meddlesome welfare bureaucracy or immoral corporate management, televangelical fundamentalism supports the dismantling of government services, the encouragement of private entrepreneurialism and the rollback of atheistic Soviet communism. As a carefully packaged form of self-administered support, televangelist programming would substitute its faith and healing for public welfare services. Criticizing big business, international banks and transnational capital for stealing jobs from Americans by

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moving to Asia, televangelism sells the virtues of self-employment in faith-based selling schemes, like the Amway program, or Christian discipline in the workplace to fight the more dedicated neo-Confucian sweatshop labor of Hong Kong. Similarly, in decrying the rise of communist expansion, televangelists ensure their audience that Jesus, if he was around today, would support the MX and Pershing II missile systems. Calling on the God-fearing, Bible-toting America of old, televangelical fundamentalists urge Washington to launch search and destroy sweeps in Central America, Africa, Asia and the Caribbean to mete out fire and brimstone to all the communists, crazies and other infidels threatening America. Thus, Jerry Falwell produces special documentaries on the Soviet Union's campaign for world domination and Pat Robertson urges viewers of "The Day After" doomsday TV movie to allay their fears by calling the *700 Club*'s toll-free number.

Christian fundamentalism, when examined in its form as an audio-visual cult, has acquired ideological importance today because it apparently opposed the consumerist cultural consensus of the 1960s and 1970s. As a weak negative opposition articulating the criticisms of an artificial community of adherents, held together across several time zones and demographic niches by their watching of an electronic image, televangelism pointed out the excesses and false licenses of consumer society as a culture of narcissism. Yet, at the same time, televangelism's codes and packaging are denominated in the same basic signs of corporate capitalist consumerism. And, it has gained more visibility and influence only as it has dropped the trappings of churchly ritual and embraced the average consumer's talk show/game show/variety show consciousness more closely in its productions. Hence, its powers as an integration theology are even more dangerous in the 1980s as it continues to mass market its ministries on the frontlines of government deregulation, corporate deindustrialization and superpower destabilization.

JOHN PAUL II

by John Hellman

With good reason, most critics associate the Papacy with reaction. The lingering image is one of a Renaissance holy prince lying in state beneath twisted Bernini columns, his aquiline Medici profile turned toward heaven. Popes have historically been of, and hence often for, the well-born. Their writings have been typified by a *noblesse oblige* attitude toward the poor who, after all, will "always be with us." Indeed, on the one occasion when the forces of rebellion embraced a Pope — Pius IX, in the 1840s — they watched the "prince" of the Church turn back into just that. With even greater certainty ever after, the view on the Left has been that Popes will be Popes. With regard to the present Pope, this estimate warrants re-examination. Karol Wojtyla is not a Medici, an aristocrat, or even an Italian. He is, further, not a mere apologist for what is,

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in the catechetical sense. He is a trained intellectual in a position of enormous spiritual influence.

One reason that the depth of John Paul II has not been recognized in North America has to do with the fact that he comes out of a philosophical tradition which remains largely untranslated, and hence still unknown, in North America.[1] Because the Pope's background is Polish Catholic it has often been dismissed, *a priori*, as uncritical, sentimental, backward, and right-wing.[2] But the more one learns about the range and sophistication of the Pope's background, the more one begins to respect him.

Some have imagined John Paul II a man "of the West" who grew up in an unusual Eastern milieu in which 19th century Western Catholic practices were preserved as in a time capsule. This would help explain his hostility to communism, his old-fashioned attachment to Church authority and doctrine, and his affinity for out-dated practices such as pilgrimmages and the veneration of the Black Madonna.[3] In this view, the Pope's popularity comes from his fusion of quaint beliefs with fervent nationalism. This would explain his popularity in culturally "backward" countries, as well as among certain elements in more sophisticated ones. Beliefs and habits that have been discarded like outworn clothes in the modern West still fit in corners of the world that are not yet blessed with "liberty" and abundance.

In an important recent series of interviews with André Frossard — interviews which have become "best-sellers" in France — the Pope spoke informally on a whole range of subjects including his personal background, his faith, morality, the Church, and modern life in general.[4] The result was a valuable complement to his earlier sermons, encyclicals, books, and addresses to the various nations he had visited — as well as to the intellectual biography by G.H. Williams, and to the reminiscences of his old friend Father Mieczyslaw Malinski.[5] We are now better able to recognize how remarkably consistent this Pope has been since his election on October 16, 1978; we can also notice the originality, even brilliance, of his reflections on the spiritual and moral illnesses of contemporary Western society. These reflections are lucid, carefully thought out, and difficult to dismiss out of hand despite their demanding implications. John Paul II is determined to create "a new mentality in the Church" in accordance with the teaching of the Second Vatican Council.[6] If this new mentality entails a radical transformation within the Church, it is important to look closely at the roots and implications of John Paul II's ideas.

In his Lenten sermons at the Vatican in 1976, the then Cardinal Wojtyla spoke of the person of Jesus as "A Sign of Contradiction" to the world. This Jesus, he said, was both a "sign of liberation for people who are denied freedom of conscience and religious freedom" (as in the East), and also a "symbol of liberation from unjust structures both social and economic" (as existed in both the East and the West). On either count, he

1. The best study of John Paul's intellectual background is G.H. Williams, *The Mind of John Paul II: Origins of His Thought and Actions* (New York, 1981). See also John Hellman, "John Paul II and the Personalist Movement," in *Cross Currents*, Vol. XXX, No. 4, (Winter 1980-81), pp. 409-419; "The Prophets of Solidarity," in *America*, Vol. 147, No. 14 (November 6, 1982), pp. 266-269, and *Emmanuel Mounier and the New Catholic Left, 1930-1950* (Toronto, 1981).

2. A host of disparaging remarks on the Pope are reproduced in James Hitchcock, *Pope John Paul II and American Catholicism* (New York, 1980).

3. This was Gary Wills' point in his "Is the Pope Too Catholic?" *New York*, 12 (October 10, 1979), 49-52.

4. *N'ayez pas Peur!' André Frossard dialogue avec Jean Paul II* (Paris, 1982).

5. Williams, *op. cit.*; Mieczyslaw Malinski, *Pope John Paul II. The Life of Karol Wojtyla*. Translated by P.S. Falla (New York, 1979).

6. Malinski, *John Paul II, op. cit.*, p. 23.

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was "in every way a reproach to affluent, acquisitive, consumer societies."[7] Thus, in a Vatican which had become accustomed to describing itself as a bastion of Christian civilizations against the atheistic materialism of the East, the young Cardinal Archbishop of Cracow was speaking a new language. He envisaged a new Christian society composed of "a different culture and a different civilization" and constituted by "different relationships in production and distribution of material goods," as well as "a different understanding of value and surplus value."[8] It was evident that, for Wojtyla, Western liberal democracies were not the City of God in mortal combat with the Communist anti-Christ. In fact, by implying that the Spirit of Christ might be profoundly antithetical to both of these "systems," he was at the same time summoning men to create something beyond them.

The basis of Wojtyla's criticism of the West lies in his concern for the human personality, for "what is in man." When, as Cardinal Archbishop of Cracow, he traveled through the U.S. and Canada, he seemed particularly concerned to know how the values, behavior, and spirituality of the Poles there had been affected by life in a culture very different from that of Catholic Poland. His reservations about "the consumer society" were founded less upon a superficial moral judgment concerning the "selfishness" or "self-indulgence" of Western society than on a long-term philosophical reflection (based especially on Thomism and the philosophy of Max Scheler) about the origins of the "Western mentality" and its religious implications. He found that contemporary circumstances in the West made it extremely difficult to "discover God" there — perhaps even more difficult than in a "godless communist society," which was officially atheistic.

Early in his conversation with André Frossard, John Paul II touched on the questions of agnosticism and atheism. Here the Pope characteristically avoided that juxtaposition between the "Christian West" and the "atheistic and materialistic East" which had long characterized Vatican pronouncements. The Pope, rather than blaming atheism on the communists, argued that both agnosticism and atheism were products of a "positivist epistemology" which as much characterized the West as it did the East. In our contemporary world, according to John Paul II, "that form of knowledge called experimental has taken over people's minds and has cut them off from everything which is 'trans-material' or 'trans-phenomenal.' In the perspective of the various methodologies which are useful and efficacious for examining the visible world more and more profoundly, but which imply the positivist epistemology, not only is there no place for that which is 'invisible,' but the 'invisible' even loses its meaning."[9] One consequence of this way of looking at the world is the emergence of the idea of the "death of God," which amounts to a fundamental way of perceiving things found in both Marxist and capitalist societies. According to John Paul II, non-belief is a phenomenon that can be isolated in the modern human personality, not in political systems or ideologies. And it is a phenomenon which, because it underlies so many of the problems of the present age, must be countered with an entirely new mentality.

John Paul II's call for a radical break with the mentality of the modern world was not, he insisted to Frossard, anti-scientific or irrational. In fact, he appreciated "all that has been acquired in the order of researches and experience of the positive sciences." His objection was, rather, a fundamentally philosophical one. "I am not in agreement with

7. Karol Wojtyla, *Sign of Contradiction* (Middlegreen, Slough, Great Britain, 1979), p. 120 and p. 108.
8. *Ibid.*, p. 58.
9. *Frossard, op. cit.*, p. 73.

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[positivism] because it has a circumscribed and therefore erroneous notion of experience which deprives man of realities accessible to his knowledge. I fear that the next step of that epistemology might be, after the death of God, *the death of man* that we see threatening on the horizon of our culture and of our civilization."[10]

For John Paul II, then, the excessively narrow comprehension of human experience was behind the "practical materialism" of not only communist societies but of what he called "the consumer society" in the West as well. Thus, contemporary man finds himself in an agonizing situation, the causes of which are far deeper than rival political ideologies or economic systems. He suffers from a "fundamental illusion" which is quite dangerous. Thanks to the development of material civilization he has become "master of the visible world," even "master of the cosmos," yet he does not perceive that at the same time he has placed himself in a position of dependence in relation to that world. His "materialism" has led him to become "the object of multiple manipulations, against which he can do nothing precisely because he has entirely given over his conscience and his liberty to 'the world,' and the 'world' has taken possession of him."[11] In the thinking of the Pope, then, what seems at first a simple philosophical prejudice, in fact has far reaching, even sinister, implications for the men and women in which it predominates. It creates a spiritually asphyxiating climate, one which has a detrimental effect on the efforts of individuals subjected to it to lead truly integrated lives — lives in which spiritual realities find their just place.

It is essential to underline the fact that the Pope has deliberately framed his analysis of the de-spiritualizing aspects of modern life in a way that is applicable to communist, socialist, and capitalist cultures. In light of this, it is important, as John Paul II has pointed out, that the Church search for the causes and roots of atheism and "indifferentism," "inside itself as well as outside." In his view, the Church must not oversimplify the role of phenomena like "atheistic communism" either, but rather it should realize "*that the drive, under the form of atheism, to liberate man and free him from alienation may itself be part of the search for God.*"[12] This formulation is typical of the way in which the present Pope has attempted to think about the contemporary world in a way which transcends old categories.

Another example of John Paul II's intellectually daring and (to us) unusual mode of thinking is evident in his discussion of how difficult it is to "find God" in an "*integrally permissive society*" as compared to a *totalitarian state.* "In the two situations the man conscious of the rules and mechanisms of his existence [would be] able to discover God, or convince himself that He alone can 'save him from integral determinism.' [But] it seems to me that man becomes conscious of this more easily in the second situation than the former, more easily in a totalitarian world than in a 'laxist' one. Nevertheless, even in a permissive society he finishes by recognizing it in the long run. In the one and the other case the passage from servitude to liberty is most often tied to the discovery of God."[13]

We are so unaccustomed to separating "liberty" from "permissiveness" that it is at first difficult to grasp the Pope's point that the search for God in a communist or a fascist state is analogous to the search for Him in a "free" one. Many take for granted the fact that God's presence is far more discernible, religious truths more accessible, in the "free world," where there is religious freedom, than in the communist. How, then, can John Paul II suggest that the discovery of God might even be *easier* in a totalitarian

10. *Ibid.*, p. 73.
11. *Ibid.*, p. 140.
12. Malinski, *John Paul II*, p. 182 and p. 185 (emphasis my own).
13. *Frossard, op. cit.*, pp. 149-150.

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society than in a "free" one? What does he mean when he suggests that the discovery of God in a totally permissive society is usually bound to an aspiration for freedom?

Here it is important to notice that, for John Paul II, authentic liberty is, like love, bound up with responsibility and must not be confused with "permissiveness." True human liberty is "*that which everyone discerns in himself when he feels himself responsible.*"[14] By making this claim, John Paul II provides an existentialist definition of freedom not dissimilar from Sartre's (whose thought the Pontiff sometimes refers to in his writings). For Sartre, human freedom is "proven" through the experience of anguish which grips a person faced with a clear choice between real alternatives. If the alternatives were not real, Sartre has argued, there would be no suffering when faced with the choice between them. But, for John Paul II, it is not so much anguish which demonstrates human liberty as it is a sense of responsibility before choices with an important moral dimension. Both libertine and totalitarian societies try to pretend that this sense of responsibility does not exist, or else they try to eliminate it where they find it. This is why the "practical atheisms" on both extremes of the political spectrum are so pernicious: they both deny to man the full dignity of the freedom which is an essential part of his interior life.

In sum, John Paul II's distinction between permissiveness and true liberty depends on his existential definition of true human liberty as what one discerns in oneself when one feels responsible. From his viewpoint, a society which successfully persuades its members that it has no responsibility for an unborn child, or no responsibility for the poor, or no responsibility for the lives of people in "enemy" societies which it may contemplate annihilating is not a "free" society but a dangerously deluded one. It is a society in the grip of a perverse, spiritually arid, mentality. For this reason the Pope has been particularly troubled to note the existence in the wealthier civilizations of an "inferiority complex" among Christians when faced with the "superiority complex" characterizing the mentality of modern man steeped in the ideologies of progress, an absolute priority for sciences and technology, or in a conception of liberty excluding the recognition of any authority at all! For John Paul II, Christ taught humility before men and before the universe but His teaching excluded any complex at all: "a complex, whatever it is, denotes a certain lack of authenticity."[14]

John Paul II, whose primary concerns are religious, not political, possesses a religious perspective with important political implications for Western democracies. The papacy has, by financial interests and tradition, been tied with the political Right through most if not all of modern history. John Paul II, however, seems to be the first Pope (among several with a deep and sincere predeliction for the poor and oppressed in the world) who appears to lean toward the social-democratic political option. Here, perhaps, he hopes to find another way, wholly divorced from the alleged failures of capitalism and communism. Previous popes have had democratic or charitable policies. John Paul II, however, is the first to have worked out a totally new philosophical and political synthesis — a personalism between the totalitarianism of the East and the individualism of the West. His phenomenological analysis of the relative difficulties in finding God in different kinds of societies is essential to it. Our deep-dyed habit of considering religion a force for social privilege and conservatism makes it difficult to realize that this new kind of Pope has become an important advocate for progressive social transformations throughout the world.

14. *Ibid.*, pp. 242-243.

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POPE JOHN PAUL II ON "HUMAN WORK"

by Arthur F. McGovern, S.J.

Pope John Paul II promulgated his first major social encyclical, *Laborem Exercens* ("On Human Work"), in September 1981. The encyclical, evoked many favorable reactions, even from Marxists. One such writer even argued that on social issues at least, John Paul II stands as "a sturdy and reliable ally."[1] The Pope often speaks in categories more familiar to Marxists than to Catholics. Another commentator even indicated doubts whether U.S. Catholics realize the importance of the encyclical because "The pope's concerns are the concerns of Marx, his categories and history are those of Marx."[2] Yet, the Pope seems to identify Marxism with Marxist-Leninism.

The first thing to be said about *Laborem Exercens* is that, unlike most earlier encyclicals, the Pope wrote it himself. It is not surprising, then, that the idea of "the dignity of the human person" is the cornerstone of the encyclical, since this is precisely the message stressed in all his earlier works. Thus his discussion of the worker as "subject" is fundamental. Consistent with this value, the Pope has been outspoken in defense of the rights of the poor and the oppressed. Thus, one may ask, how much does Marxist thought influence the Pope's analysis? Baum considers many of the new ideas in the encyclical as "derived from a critical and creative dialogue with Marxism."[3] Yet there is little indication that the Pope ever undertook any in-depth study of Marx's writings. But the Pope's participation as a young priest and Catholic intellectual in a group which did use and criticize Marxist analysis suggests a strong indirect bond which may explain the many Marxist elements which can be found in the Pope's writings.

Writing prior to the publication of *Laborem Exercens*, Hellman argued that the Pope was part of a Catholic movement in Poland which used Mounier's "personalist" philosophy to criticize Marxism and capitalism alike.[4] Comparisons between Mounier's *A Personalist Manifesto* (1936) and John Paul's encyclical support this view. The similarities are striking: capitalism is seen as a system which subordinates persons to the drive for profit, Marxism is criticized for its emphasis on collective consciousness to the neglect of the individual person, the need is expressed for a middle course between liberalism and collectivism, etc. Most importantly Mounier explicitly pronounced the main principle of the encyclical, "the primacy of labor over capital."[5]

This may help in understanding the encyclical. It contains few prescriptions or prohibitions. It seeks, rather, to develop ethical norms for judging socio-economic systems. Anyone familiar with the writings of the young Marx will find striking similarities in the Pope's words about the importance of work. As John Paul II expresses it in the opening paragraph of *Laborem Exercens:* "Work is one of the characteristics that distinguish man from the rest of creatures . . . Thus work bears a particular mark of man

1. Carl Marzani, "The Vatican as a Left Ally?" *Monthy Review*, July-August 1982.

2. Clarence Thompson, from a review of *Laborem Exercens* and Gregory Baum's commentary in the *National Catholic Reporter*, September 3, 1982, p. 11.

3. Gregory Baum, *The Priority of Labor* (New York, 1982), p. 3.

4. John Hellman, "John Paul II and the Personalist Movement," *Cross Currents*, Winter 1980-81, pp. 409-19.

5. Emmanuel Mounier, *A Personalist Manifesto*, tr. by the Monks of St. John's Abbey (London: Longmans, Green & Co., 1938, French original, 1936). See especially chapter IV on Marxism, chapter XI on capitalism, and "primacy of labor over capital" in chapter XII, pp. 196-199.

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and of humanity, the mark of a person operating within a community of persons. And the mark decides its interior characteristics; in a sense it constitutes its very nature."[6] The Pope sees work as a means not only of meeting basic physical needs but also as the source of progress, and a ground for human dignity. Like the young Marx, the Pope stresses the idea that work should make us more human, expressing and increasing our dignity (n. 9). Also like Marx, the Pope recognizes that certain modes of organizing work can be a major source of social injustices (n. 1). Hence he stresses that "*human work is a key, probably the essential key, to the whole social question*" (n. 3).

If the primacy of work is a basic Marxist principle, the ground established by John Paul for its importance is biblical. The book of Genesis claims that we were made "in the image and likeness of God" and given a mandate by God: "Be fruitful and multiply, and fill the earth and subdue it." Work, then, brings us dominion over the earth and makes us sharers in the creative activity of God (no. 4). But what the Pope goes on to say about "man as subject of work," seems to challenge classical Marxism. Whereas classical Marxists argued that "men create their own history," they also insisted that history is governed by objective laws which make class struggle and the ultimate triumph of socialism inevitable. The Pope's position is different. Human beings are always subjects of their own actions. The rise of capitalism, class struggle, the power of technology, the formation of new political and economic systems — these are all the results of human choices, not historical necessity. Material conditions may constantly influence and limit choices, but they never negate human subjectivity.

The Pope points out that there are two ways of considering work. In its objective dimension, it is a transformation of nature. The focus here is on what is produced. In its subjective dimension, on the other hand, work is a transformation of the working person. It is this sense of work which the Pope stresses. A person's actions "must all serve to realize his humanity, to fulfill the calling to be a person." This is why work is to be judged by the extent to which it increases or diminishes the dignity and self-realization of the worker (n. 6). This is work as it should be: work for the self-fulfillment of those who work. But historically, of course, this primacy of the subject has become inverted. Workers have become mere "tools" of production, and work itself has come to be treated as a commodity that the worker sells to his employer. However, the Pope does not identify private ownership with capitalism. When workers are treated as mere instruments of production rather than as the true subjects of work, "this reversal of order, whatever the program or name under which it occurs, should rightly be called 'capitalism' " (n. 7). It is not ownership as such, but giving priority to capital over labor, that constitutes capitalism, and with this definition the encyclical will later treat communist countries as "state capitalisms" (n. 14). Finally, while many parts of the encyclical focus on industrial workers, the Pope includes *all* humans as subjects or potential subjects of work — homemakers, grocery clerks, business executives and professionals, as well as factory workers. Thus, for the Pope, workers are not "a class" struggling for power.

The idea of "the priority of labor over capital" is the centerpiece of the Pope's ethical analysis. John Paul insists that the terms "capital" and "labor" do not refer simply to "things," or to impersonal forces, but to real people in conflict. The encyclical unequivocally blames capitalist exploitation for this conflict. The Pope challenges this exploitation with his principle of the priority of labor over capital. In the productive

6. The complete text for *Laborem Exercens* can be found in Baum's *Priority of Labor*. It was also published in *Origins*, Sept. 24, 1981. The numbers cited within the article are common to all editions of the text.

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process, labor is always the primary efficient cause, while capital remains a mere instrumental cause (n. 12). Like Marx, the Pope notes that capital itself is accumulated labor. The means of production "are the result of the historical heritage of human labor" (no. 12). Consequently, no productive system can be judged ethical unless it conforms to the principle of the substantial and real priority of labor. Both capitalism and communism have violated this principle. Capitalism developed a practical materialism which considered workers as mere tools of production. Communism considers humans the "result" of productive forces rather than subjects (n. 13).

This naturally leads to the twin issues of the ownership and use of the means of production. The Pope, consistent with the past social teachings of the Church, rejects both the elimination of private property and its exaltation as a sacred right. The Church's teachings therefore "diverge radically from the program of collectivization as proclaimed by Marxism and put into practice in various countries" (n. 14). But these teachings also assert that "the right to private property is subordinated to the right to common use, to the fact that the goods of the earth are meant for everyone" (n. 14). In this respect, it is really how property is *used* which becomes the critical issue. The purpose of ownership of the means of production should be to give all people access to the goods of the earth through work. Ownership must serve labor by making possible the universal distribution of goods and the right to common use of them (n. 14). The Pope thus rejects a "rigid" capitalism which subordinates the common good to private gain and any monopolization of capital which precludes common access to work and goods. But John Paul also rejects "collectivist" socialism because it only shifts control from an elite of private owners to the control of a bureaucratic party-elite (n. 14).

What John Paul II would like to see promoted are "proposals for joint ownership of the means of work, sharing by the workers in the management and/or profits of business, so-called shareholding by labor, etc." (n. 14). His goal is an economic system which not only gives fair wages to workers but also permits the worker "to know that in his work, even on something that is owned in common, he is working 'for himself' " (n. 14). The "even something that is owned in common" suggests an openness to socialized ownership. Other statements in this section of the encyclical (n. 14 and 15) reinforce this. John Paul speaks of well-founded "exceptions" to private ownership, to socialization "in suitable conditions," and to "true socialization" of the means of production (i.e., when workers see themselves as part owners). He seems to favor a "mixed economy."

In any case, the ideal society envisioned by John Paul is one which embodies the "priority of labor over capital." But what structural changes will achieve this ideal order? The Pope remains vague in the means he stresses, which in itself reflects a long Catholic tradition which has tried to stake out a "middle-ground" between individualism and collectivism.

More specifically, John Paul II seeks to balance the need he sees for centralized planning with decentralization of power. The free market alone will not solve the problem of unemployment; planning is needed (n. 17). Workers' rights cannot be left to economic systems which are guided by the criterion of maximum profit. The state and other agencies which make up the "indirect employer" must seek to provide employment and to help plan the way the work process is organized. Similarly, giving a free hand to multinational corporations, who "fix the highest possible prices for their products, while trying at the same time to fix the lowest possible prices for raw materials or semimanufactured goods," will not create fair trade relations between rich and poor nations (n. 17). International organizations must use their influence to bring fairer planning.

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But if centralized planning is needed, it must be balanced with decentralized power structures through independent unions, different types of ownership, and many intermediate bodies all working to ensure economic and social as well as political democracy.

Since the Catholic Church stresses obedience to the Roman pontiff, one might expect the encyclical to have an enormous impact on the world's 500 million Catholics. Things are not quite that simple, however, since on an individual basis the principles in the encyclical such as the "priority of labor over capital" do not translate easily into moral precepts that an individual must accept. Thus, *Time* magazine's concluding comment about the encyclical may be on the mark: "Individuals are thus left free to draw from it the spiritual and social guidance they most need."[7] Commentators have done just that, interpreting it within the framework of their own values. Thus von Hoffman and Jones both read the encyclical as an indictment of capitalism,[8] while Schervish saw it as an opening toward democratic socialism.[9] On the other hand, while praising it as a "brilliant encyclical," Novak interpreted it as a defense of private property.[10] From a world perspective, one can detect the potential for great impact. If Peru, for example, is at all typical of other Latin American countries, the encyclical may already be exercising considerable influence. In that country, the bishops' council printed thousands of copies of a simple "comic-book" version of the encyclical for teaching it to the poor. A television program about the encyclical was developed for teaching purposes. Gutierrez, the liberation theologian, devoted many study sessions to the encyclical and other Church social teachings as part of his summer school in Lima.

In the U.S., the encyclical could come into much greater prominence when the bishops publish a letter on U.S. capitalism. (The letter is now in preparation, but perhaps two years away from final adoption). Early in 1983, the Canadian Conference of Catholic Bishops created a storm of controversy with a pastoral letter which strongly criticized the Canadian government's economic policies and priorities. The Church document most cited by the Canadian bishops was *Laborem Exercens*. The U.S. bishops' letter on U.S. capitalism will almost certainly also use as basic principles the points set forth by John Paul II on human work. If the U.S. bishops' letter evokes the same interest and discussion as their recent statement on nuclear war, and if it is as sharp a critique as that made by the Canadian bishops, *Laborem Exercens* could be a most significant document.

7. *Time*, September 1981.

8. Nicholas von Hoffman, "Papal Economics," *The New Republic*, Nov. 4, 1981 and Arthur Jones for the *National Catholic Reporter*, Sept. 25, 1981.

9. Paul G. Schervish, "Is the Pope a Socialist?", *In These Times*, Oct. 6, 1981.

10. Michael Novak, "The Pope's Brilliant Encyclical," *National Review*, Oct. 16, 1981.

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Reviews:

Gershom Scholem, *Walter Benjamin: The Story of a Friendship,* Trans. Harry Zohn, (JPS: Philadelphia, 1981).

The appearance of an English translation of Gershom Scholem's 1975 memoir of his lifelong friendship with Walter Benjamin cannot help but raise (or, re-raise) a variety of questions, both biographical and substantive, concerning Benjamin's celebrated oscillation between theological and materialist interests. Scholem's portrait of Benjamin is undoubtedly the most intimate testimony available concerning Benjamin's early development — his early affiliations with the German Youth Movement, his virulent antiwar sentiment, his fascination for antipositivistic, speculative modes of thought, and his taciturn and often unpredictable character. The reliability of Scholem's account is buttressed by a diary he kept during these years and a vast number of letters from Benjamin to him. Often, at crucial junctures Scholem suspends his narrative and relies directly on the documentary support provided by their correspondence.[1] As of 1923, however, Scholem emigrated to Palestine and saw Benjamin again only twice thereafter: in 1927 and 1938. Consequently, their friendship in these years took on a largely epistolary character. Scholem himself harbored few illusions about Benjamin's at times pathological penchant for *Geheimniskrämerei*; hence, the letters were anything but an uninhibited outpouring of sentiment. Yet, even though their content was often influenced by considerations of tactfulness (Benjamin was, after all, fond of referring in the 1930s to his Janus-face, taking now Scholem, now Brecht into his confidence, and doing his best to keep them both in the dark concerning his relations with the other), Scholem was without doubt Benjamin's major confidant during this period.

Although Scholem referred to his friendship with Benjamin as "the most important of my life,"[2] it was anything but an untroubled one. This was in part due to the peculiarities of Benjamin's character. He had an at times desperate need of privacy, a veritable noise-phobia, and a set of themes which were clearly "out-of-bounds" in discussion, if one desired to remain on friendly terms with him. In all these respects Scholem, Benjamin's junior by five years, showed himself to be incredibly solicitous, so highly did he value the latter's friendship.

The early and closest period of their friendship spanned the years 1915-1923. 1915 marked a turning point and a period of crisis for both men. Benjamin, who had been very active in a radical wing of the Youth Movement associated with Gustav Wyneken, had recently broken with the latter after his (in Benjamin's eyes) hypocritical support of the German war effort. Since his hopes for the spiritual rebirth which the Youth Movement was to herald were crushed amid the outpouring of jingoistic zeal at the outbreak of the war, this was a time of grave personal uncertainty for him. Scholem, though he came from a thoroughly assimilated family, had opted at a very youthful age for an exploration of the meaning of a Jewish identity, which would ultimately lead to his Kabbalah studies and his Zionist sentiments. However, one must be very clear about the fact that, for Scholem, Zionism signified primarily a passionate rejection of the self-deception and delusions of assimilated Jewry, and a *cultural* rather than political affirmation of Judaism and its historical specificity. In political terms, this meant that,

1. Moreover, the letters reproduced often represent unexpurgated versions of the 1966 Frankfurt edition of Benjamin's *Briefe*, 2 vols., edited by Scholem and Adorno. This edition, whose inadequacies are generally recognized, will ultimately be supplanted by a "complete" edition edited by Gary Smith.

2. Scholem, *From Berlin to Jerusalem* (New York, 1980).

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whereas he was in favor of emigration to Palestine, he was against a strictly *political* solution to the problem of Jewish identity — that is, the idea of making Israel into a "state among other states." For this reason, his Zionism remained strictly at odds with the predominant historical manifestations of this credo — be it the case of Youth Movement Zionism, which he perceived as merely a pale analogue of *völkisch*, romantic, and naturalistic elements of the German Youth Movement as a whole (and which seemed to copy these traits in a thoroughly uncritical, un-Jewish, assimilationist vein) or in that of its better known rationalistic guises. Fundamentally, he believed that the rationalistic fervor of Zionism had merely internalized some of the more problematical aspects of 18th and 19th century European secular culture, a rationalistic culture which he considered inimical to the spirit of Judaism (though he never went as far as Buber's attempt to celebrate the virtues of Judaism as a healthy, non-Western, *Oriental* culture; the Diaspora had definitely changed all this), a culture whose influence on Judaism he increasingly criticized in his writings.[3]

One of the most unequivocal matters which initially attracted Benjamin and Scholem to one another was their virulent opposition to the war. Scholem's antiwar sentiments were cause for his expulsion from secondary school in 1915; while during the war years he was able to feign with remarkable conviction the behavior of a paranoid schizophrenic to qualify for a medical discharge. Benjamin was discharged on the pretext of a nervous disorder, whose symptoms were in part produced with the aid of hypnotic treatments. Scholem's hostility toward the war resulted in a short-lived political alliance with his brother Werner, a left Social Democrat who later joined the Independents after the party split, then served as a KPD deputy in the Reichstag until 1926, when he was expelled as a Trotskyist.[4] Their mutual antiwar feelings also played a role in their common rejection (less extreme on Scholem's part) of Martin Buber, unquestionably one of the most influential Zionist figures of the day. Both men resented Buber's crass glorification of the "war-experience" as a proving ground for Zionist fortitude and virtue, a line of argumentation, of course, whose militaristic conclusions were ultimately indistinguishable from the position of Jewish assimilationists. Benjamin composed a hostile, brilliant letter to Buber in 1916 rejecting the latter's invitation to collaborate on a new journal, *Der Jude*.[5] In this important letter, which contains the seeds of Benjamin's own messianic philosophy of language, he vigorously challenges Buber's crude debasement of language, the sacred fount of all meaning, as a mere means, a "stimulus to action." For Benjamin, language in its highest function is not a bourgeois means of conveyance but an entity possessing a dignity and status as an end in itself.[6] These basic objections to Buber's theories would later play an important role in the formidable criticisms raised by both Benjamin and Scholem against the Buber-Rosenzweig bible translation which, failing to respect the difficulties and nuances of the Hebrew original, attempted to recast scripture in an upbeat, modern, quasi-existential lingo.[7]

3. For a more precise account of the nature of Scholem's Zionism, see his *On Jews and Judaism in Crisis,* W.J. Dannhauser ed. (New York, 1976); and David Biale, *Gershom Scholem: Kabbalah and Counter-History* (Cambridge, 1982).

4. He was arrested by the Nazis in 1933 and died seven years later in Buchenwald.

5. Benjamin, *Briefe*, *op. cit.*, pp. 125-128.

6. I have investigated Benjamin's philosophy of language in my book *Walter Benjamin, An Aesthetic of Redemption* (New York, 1982), pp. 37-43 and 239-249. See also Winfried Meninghaus, *Walter Benjamin's Theorie der Sprach-Magie* (Frankfurt, 1980).

7. For an excellent survey of this controversy, see Martin Jay, "The Politics of Translation: Siegfried Kracauer and Walter Benjamin on the Buber-Rosenzweig Bible," *Yearbook of the Leo Baeck Institute* (1976), pp. 3-24.

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Scholem's account yields a revealing portrait of the critic as a young man, which is especially valuable considering Benjamin's own distinct efforts to camouflage all traces of his intellectual influences, in keeping with his philosophical "anti-subjectivism."[8] Though he had as yet no vested interest in Kabbalah studies, Scholem encouraged Benjamin in 1917 to acquire works by the two German scholars most deeply versed in Kabbalist knowledge, Franz von Baader and Franz Joseph Molitor. The latter had also been a student of Schelling and devoted 45 years of his life to Kabbalist studies, which culminated in his four volume opus, *Philosophie der Geschichte oder Über die Tradition*. Summarizing their common interests after their initial encounters, Scholem lists "a resoluteness in pursuing our intellectual goals, rejection of our environment — which was basically the German-Jewish assimilated middle class — and a positive attitude toward metaphysics" (21). The last trait obviously did not extend to the work of Hegel, of whom Benjamin remarks "his intellectual physiognomy is that of an intellectual brute" (30); although he was prepared to defend Hegel's "mystical" side, especially with reference to the philosophy of nature. Benjamin was unilaterally opposed to the Neo-Kantian tradition then dominant at German universities. According to Benjamin, Kant was motivated by an inferior concept of experience, in place of which Benjamin himself sought one that was "absolute" (60). In fact, so disgusted were the two with the German intellectual milieu of the day that, while in Switzerland (1918-19), they formed their own imaginary "alternative" university, the "University of Muri." In an attempt to escape from the hyperrationalism of contemporary German philosophy, Benjamin, in keeping with his interest in mythological forms of thought, took courses on the civilizations of the Mayas and Aztecs. These considerations also played a strong role in his later experimentation (though strictly supervised) with hashish.[9] "A philosophy that does not include the possibility of soothsaying from *coffee grounds* and cannot explicate it cannot be a true philosophy," he proclaimed on one occasion (59).

As further evidence of Benjamin's mystical proclivity, Scholem cites the fact that his bibliophilia resulted in attempts to deduce "metaphysically valid insights" from books solely on the basis of their binding and paper — a practice which, in overstepping certain vaguely defined boundaries of life-conduct, Scholem deemed decadent. "Walter has a lot of illegitimate insights as well," Scholem remarks in notes made at the time (1918). "There's no way to change him. On the contrary, the only thing I have to guard against is the incursion of this sphere into my own through personal conduct" (71).

This period also witnesses the beginning of Benjamin's life-long concern with the themes of magic and myth. While he was in most of his writings relentlessly critical of myth — for him, myth represented a hellish and repressed world-order in which the lives of individuals were inextricably embedded in an implacable, recurrent cycle of guilt and fate[10] — at the same time, one often senses a certain ambivalence to myth on Benjamin's part, in a way not uncommon among German "romantic anti-capitalist thinkers" of the day.[11] Scholem describes an important conversation in 1918, in which

8. For more on Benjamin's "anti-subjectivism," see Theodor Adorno, "A Portrait of Walter Benjamin," in *Prisms* (London, 1967), pp. 235 ff. A new edition of this work has recently appeared with M.I.T. Press.

9. Cf. Benjamin, *Uber Hashisch* (Frankfurt, 1971).

10. See especially his essay "Fate and Character" in Benjamin, *Reflections,* Peter Demetz, ed. (New York, 1978), pp. 304-11.

11. For an explication of this concept, see Michael Löwy, *Georg Lukács: From Romanticism to Bolshevism* (London, 1979).

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Benjamin set forth many of his ideas on these themes, ideas which would find profound resonances in his written work in ensuing years: "Benjamin read to me a lengthy note on dreams and clairvoyance, in which he tried to formulate the laws governing the world of premythical spectral [*Gespenstischen*] phenomena. He distinguished between two historical ages of the spectral and demonic that preceded the age of revelation (which I proposed calling the messianic instead). Benjamin said the real content of myth was the enormous revolution that polemicized against the spectral and brought its age to an end. Even then he occupied himself with ideas about perception as a reading of configurations of the surface, which is the way prehistoric man perceived the world around him, particularly the sky. This was the genesis of the reflections he made many years later in *Lehre von Ähnlichen* (Doctrine of the Similar).[12] The origin of the constellations as configurations on the sky surface was, so he asserted, the beginning of reading and writing, and this coincided with the development of the mythic age. The constellations were for the mythic world what the revelation of Holy Writ was to be later" (61).

At this point in their relationship, although things were not tranquil, it was obvious that because of their passionately shared interest in relations between history, revelation and messianism, the friendship remained strong. Soon, Scholem decided to pursue in earnest his interest in Kabbalah, traveling to Munich, where the largest collection of Kabbalistic manuscripts was housed, to write a dissertation. Although Benjamin's strong literary and aesthetic interests motivated him to study *Germanistik*, it is clear that the metaphysical orientation which had developed during the years of his close contact with Scholem remained very much the theoretical fulcrum of his important studies of this period: his dissertation of 1919 on German romantic art criticism; his 1923 "Task of the Translator" essay; his long monograph on Goethe's *Elective Affinities*; and the failed *Habilitationsschrift* on 17th century German baroque tragic drama or "*Trauerspiel*". However, after Scholem's emigration to Palestine in 1923, the intellectual bond which had united them previously was severely strained, owing to Benjamin's gradual departure from the speculative approach of his youthful work in favor of an attitude where the doctrines of historical materialism came to play an increasingly greater role. The turning point for Benjamin apparently came during a sojourn on Capri in 1924, where he discussed politics extensively with Ernst Bloch (with whom he was already acquainted from his Switzerland stay of 1918-19) and made the acquaintance of a Latvian Bolshevik and Brecht associate, Asja Lacis — with whom Benjamin fell deeply in love. It was also at this time that Benjamin was introduced to Georg Lukács' Hegelian-Marxist masterpiece *History and Class Consciousness*. Benjamin already esteemed Lukács' pre-Marxist aesthetic writings *Soul and Form* and *Theory of the Novel*, and the discussion of reification in *History and Class Consciousness* would also influence him profoundly. Benjamin's final push in a Marxist direction seems also to have been conditioned by circumstances: the withdrawal of financial support by his parents which, coming at a time of severe economic crisis, pushed him into the ranks of Weimer's ever growing proletarianized intelligentsia, and the rejection of his *Habilitationsschrift* in 1925, resulting in the foundering of his academic plans, which were tepid in any event.[13]

12. A translation of this piece can be found in *New German Critique* 17 (Spring, 1979), pp. 65-69.

13. Cf. Benjamin's letter to Scholem of February 19, 1925, in which he laments, "Above all, what worries me in the event of the successful completion [of Benjamin's *Habilitation* efforts] is, firstly Frankfurt [where he would be teaching], then lectures, students, etc., things which would murderously consume my time."

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Scholem is correct (123) that it was only after 1928 that Marxism shaped Benjamin's thinking. 1929 signifies (for Scholem and Adorno as well) that fateful year when the influence of Brecht became increasingly prominent in Benjamin's work, culminating in the essays from the mid-1930s in which his partisanship for "functional art" — a partisanship which, as Scholem and Adorno clearly recognized, could not have been more diametrically opposed to his earlier aesthetics[14] — reached its peak: *viz.*, "The Author as Producer" and "The Work of Art in the Age of Mechanical Reproduction." Scholem was considerably taken aback by this turn in his friend's thinking, and much of their correspondence over the ensuing fifteen years centered on precisely this issue. If Benjamin had connected himself to Marxist scholarship and communist politics unequivocally, there would have been little point in further discussion. However, this was far from the case, since his subsequent labors witnessed a puzzling, even schizophrenic oscillation between materialist and metaphysical investigations; and on occasion, such as the "Karl Kraus" essay of 1931, the attempt was made to combine both outlooks in the same piece. Hence, his closest associates and correspondents were always kept slightly off balance concerning the direction toward which his thinking would next veer.

Scholem's position on these developments was unambiguous. "To me," he remarks in retrospect, "communism in its Marxist form constituted the diametrically opposite position to the anarchistic convictions that Benjamin and I hitherto had shared politically" (123). From 1926 to 1930, he engaged in extensive long-distance lobbying to lure Benjamin toward Jerusalem and the domain of Jewish studies. A breakthrough seemed to have been achieved during Scholem's 1927 trip to Paris. Although Benjamin remained quiet about his turn towards "radical communism," avoiding any direct discussion of the matter by alleging that his own thoughts on it were as yet unclear, he was apparently quite willing to discuss the prospect of learning Hebrew with the possibility in view of an academic appointment to a projected School of the Humanities in Jerusalem. Scholem arranged a meeting between Benjamin and the chancellor of the Hebrew University of Jerusalem, Judah Leon Magnes, to discuss this prospect. In the course of the two-hour meeting Benjamin appears to have even astounded Scholem with the vigor and brilliance with which he pleaded his case as a Jewish scholar. He contended that he had come to the realization that his ideas on the philosophy of language could no longer interact in a fruitful way with German and French texts. Moreover, his theoretical approach had found virtually no positive response in Germany. Benjamin had always claimed he needed texts of "canonical importance" as a foil to develop his philosophical ideas, and he now believed he would be able to reach an entirely new plateau as a critic were he to devote himself to Hebrew texts. Magnes was tremendously impressed by Benjamin's presentation and, after receiving some positive evaluations concerning his work, agreed to provide Benjamin a stipend with which to commence his Hebrew studies.

Yet, there were other forces tugging at Benjamin at the same time, and from opposite directions. Asja Lacis had come to Berlin in 1928, and in her memoirs, *Revolutionär als Beruf* (Munich, 1973), she boasts of having single-handedly changed Benjamin's mind concerning his emigration plans (although she erroneously attributes this feat to their 1924 Capri conversations, when Benjamin harbored no such intentions). In his letters

14. E.g., in the first paragraph of his "The Task of the Translator" essay, Benjamin claims that "Art...posits man's physical and spiritual existence, but in none of its works is it concerned with his response. No poem is intended for the reader, no picture for the beholder, no symphony for the listener." Cf. *Illuminations*, p. 69.

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to Scholem, he thus repeatedly postpones his projected date of departure. Perhaps the *coup de grace* for his emigation plans was a protracted and bitter divorce suit filed by his wife, Dora, which lasted for a year beginning in December 1929. Yet, Benjamin was by no means blameless for the difficult separation. The divorce itself had come at his request, so that he would be free to marry Lacis — allegedly merely to secure her immigration status. The sad irony here is that their relationship appeared to be nothing but a series of disappointments for Benjamin, essentially a case of unrequited love — a fact which is confirmed by the recently published edition of Benjamin's *Moskauer Tagebuch* (Frankfurt, 1981), a log he kept during his two month visit to the Soviet Union in December of 1926 and January 1927.

Scholem remained relatively genial about a situation which, owing to the stipend that Benjamin had already consumed and was of course unable to repay, had placed him in a rather awkward light with Magnes.[15] It was the Karl Kraus essay of 1931, along with Benjamin's lengthy, dishonest reticence in providing Scholem with a final account of his Jerusalem decision (Scholem at this point harbored no illusions about a positive outcome), which finally pushed Scholem toward confrontation with his clearly troubled friend. Part of his reason for pressing Benjamin, he claimed, was to motivate him to undertake a necessary self-clarification of his own position regarding materialism and metaphysics. In retrospect, Scholem comments: "That Benjamin did not particularly welcome such clarification I could easily grasp, but it took me some time to understand that at bottom that clarification was not possible for him. His later work proved that he was incapable of making a decision between metaphysics and materialism (as he conceived of the latter). Benjamin's attitude toward dialectical materialism as a heuristic principle rather than as a dogma (his position from 1931 on) left the way clear for the continuing development of a metaphysical, intellectual wellspring that had little, and frequently enough, nothing, to do with the categories of materialism" (169).

The confrontation over this issue was of such significance for their relationship that Scholem chose to reprint three of the most important letters — two by him, and one by Benjamin — as an appendix to the volume. Scholem's basic charge is that in paying lip-service to materialist phraseology and categories, while nevertheless retaining allegiance to the metaphysical insights that dominated his early work, Benjamin is engaging in a type of self-deception that results ultimately in a form of self-betrayal.[16] This practice represents a literary sham, Scholem claims, which any reader will be able to see through. In consequence, Benjamin is squandering the opportunity to become "a very important person in the history of critical thought, the legitimate bearer of the most fruitful and most genuine ongoing traditions of a Hamann and a Humboldt" (228).

Benjamin's reply testifies to his unrepentent willingness consciously to suspend his thought between "extremes," no matter how much this practice might violate his work from the standpoint of conventional standards of literary consistency. He is under no illusions concerning the fact that, as Scholem pointed out, from the perspective of the Party, his writings are "counterrevolutionary." Yet, what is more important to him is

15. See, e.g., his letter to Benjamin of February 20, 1930, in *Briefe* 2, *op. cit.*, pp. 510-512.

16. It is of interest to note that Adorno's 1938 critique of Benjamin's "Paris of the Second Empire in Baudelaire" study expresses a remarkably similar sentiment: "The impression your entire study conveys...is that you have done violence to yourself. Your solidarity with the Institute, which pleases no one more than myself, has induced you to pay tributes to a Marxism which are not really suited to Marxism or yourself." Cf. *Aethetics and Politics* (London, 1977), p. 130.

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that he has at least *rendered them unserviceable for the forces of counter-revolution*. Hence, he is straddling the fence between two camps. However, in a revealing moment he claims, "it is not given to me to respond to false circumstances correctly, i.e., with the 'correct thing' " (232). That is, his own stance merely reflects the inherent contradictions of the objective situation, namely, that Benjamin is a "bourgeois" writer in a world that desperately cries out for revolution. It would be impossible for him to undo the legacies of birth and education, to turn himself inside out somehow and emerge as a "proletarian writer." This would merely be another false way of overcoming contradictions. Instead, he aims to function more or less as a member of a fifth column attempting to undermine his own class from within, and suggests the possibility that in a changed historical situation — i.e., in the event of a successful German Bolshevik revolution — the character of his own literary production would undergo a change, such that it would no longer have to oscillate between extremes, and hence would no longer stand in contradiction to Party literary dictates. For better or worse, Benjamin's belief in the necessity of a European revolution outweighed his concern with his own *purely* literary interests — though the latter were never abandoned *in toto*.

Scholem and Benjamin would meet only once more, in 1938. In addition to the discussions of his various literary projects, his relationship to Marxism was also a central theme. Scholem was surprised at his noncommital attitude when the matter of the Moscow trials was raised. Benjamin's attitude toward the philosophy of language was the diametrical opposite of all his earlier pronouncements on the theme: he was now in favor of the resolute elimination of all magical rudiments from language, which accounted for his fascination with the work of both Scheerbart and Brecht. They also discussed his controversial 1936 "Work of Art" essay. Scholem had difficulty comprehending the relation between the first part of the essay on the concept of "aura", which bore strong resemblances to his earlier metaphysical writings, and the second part glorifying film as a revolutionary art form. When Scholem pointed out the apparent contradiction, Benjamin would only reply: "the philosophical bond between the two parts of the essay that you miss will be supplied by the revolution more effectively than me" (207).

Shortly after this final encounter, Scholem would visit the Institute for Social Research in New York, which had provided Benjamin with means of support during the last seven years of his life. Scholem, mistrustful of its influence on Benjamin for many of the same reasons he was suspicious of the latter's Brecht-connection, was pleased to find the Institute's members resolutely anti-Stalinist. He was also surprised at Adorno's sincere receptiveness to Benjamin's theological dimension: "I had expected a Marxist who would insist on the liquidation of what were in my opinion the most valuable furnishings in Benjamin's intellectual household. Instead I encountered here a man who definitely had an open mind and even a positive attitude toward these traits, although he viewed them with his own dialectical perspective" (215). Scholem's impressions of the Institute circle as a whole were formulated in a detailed letter to Benjamin of November 6-8, 1938.[17] There he observes: "The people of the Institute are all *very* intelligent and all a little unreliable [*unreel*]. The question is whether they thereby pay tribute to their intelligence or their social situation." In response, Benjamin has the following to say: "The parts [of your report on America] which are dedicated to the Institute merely confirm my own thoughts on the matter."[18]

17. The letter has only recently been made available in the Benjamin-Scholem *Briefwechsel*, 1933-1940 (Frankfurt, 1980), pp. 281-287. Benjamin's response can be found on pp. 290-294 of the same edition.

18. *Ibid.* Literally, Benjamin's reply was as follows: "er [Scholem's report] hat mich in den Par-

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The appearance of Scholem's book and especially his remarks concerning Adorno's positive attitude toward Benjamin's theological tendencies raises the issue of the latter's influence on the Frankfurt School. This has been superbly addressed in Susan Buck-Morss' study of the intellectual bond between Benjamin and Adorno, which emphasizes the significance of the Prologue in Benjamin's *Trauerspiel* book for Adorno's epistemological development.[19] However, one could raise the further question: exactly how seriously did Adorno take the theological discussion of his friend's thinking and what precisely was the concrete impact of it on his thought?

One aspect of Benjamin's theological side which exercised a profound influence on both Horkheimer and Adorno was his philosophy of history, which found its most explicit and apocalyptical formulation in the 1940 "Theses on the Philosophy of History."[20] There, especially in the ninth thesis which takes the Paul Klee water-color "Angelus Novus" as its point of departure, Benjamin develops his messianic theory of history as an incessant catastrophe which piles "ruin upon ruin" at the foot of the powerless angel; nevertheless, there exists for Benjamin an *oblique* relation between this series of disasters, which masquerade as historical "progress," and the messianic realm — for the "storm," after all, is blowing *from* Paradise. These reflections, in part conditioned by the dire circumstances, both political and personal, which confronted him at the time, were also expressed by Benjamin in other significant pieces: in the fragments "*Trauerspiel* and *Tragödie*" (1916) and the "Theological-Political Fragment" (circa 1920), and in the conception of history as "natural history" which resonates throughout the 1925 *Trauerspiel* book.

It is only a small step from this "negative philosophy of history" — a concept of "*Verfallsgeschichte*," or history-as-decline — to the philosophy of history espoused by Horkheimer and Adorno in *Dialectic of Enlightenment*, where, as was the case for Benjamin in the "Theses," the chief object of theoretical attack are theories of unilinear historical progress — both bourgeois and Marxist. In the cases of Benjamin and Horkheimer and Adorno, such theories merely serve as an ideological justification *vis-à-vis* the real core of suffering and oppression which constitutes history as an as yet mythical and spellbound "prehistory" — a history that is not yet consciously controlled and mastered by the historical subjects themselves. Hence, by unveiling the negativity which lies beneath the appearance of universal harmony and well-being, the materialist historiographer seeks to brush the manifest content of history "against the grain," to call history by its *proper name* as it were, a theoretical process of demystification which is the necessary prerequisite for any generalized process of social transformation. (The theological notion of calling things by their proper names was developed by Benjamin in an early essay "On Language as Such and the Language of Man" and is based on the biblical distinction between "word" and "name.")

One way to describe the influence of Benjamin on the historico-philosophical thought of the Frankfurt school would be to say that his theological convictions resurface there in *secularized form*. This is true above all in the case of Adorno's work. It is clear that in Benjamin's writings the kabbalistically derived theory of "negative theology" plays a central role.[21] This means that the most thoroughly profane and forsaken of unredeemed historical life can be seized upon and merely "*inverted*" in order to

tien, die dem Institut gewidmet sind, kaum auf Gedanken gebracht, die nicht schon meine eigenen gewesen wären."

19. *The Origin of Negative Dialectics* (New York, 1977).

20. Benjamin, *Illuminations, op. cit.*, pp. 253-264.

21. For more on the notion of negative theology, see Wolin, *Walter Benjamin: An Aesthetic of Redemption, op. cit.*, pp. 29-77, and Biale, *Gershom Scholem: Kabbalah and Counter-History*.

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approximate a vision of what the messianic realm itself would look like; for it is believed that the historical and messianic ages stand in an *inverse* relationship to one another. They represent antitheses. This conception comes to play a central role in Adorno's work, although divested of its overt theological underpinnings. For Adorno, the existing state of historical negativity is itself transformed into a determinate index of the ground that must be traversed before reconciliation can be attained. Hence, in a procedure noticeably indebted to Benjamin's negative theology, Adorno seeks out the most extreme traces of historical disintegration and treats such phenomena as negative indices of reconciled life. That is, it is precisely such extreme phenomena which represent the most revealing touchstone concerning the state of fragmentation of which society is capable and toward which it innately inclines. Moreover, given this initial assumption, the method of immanent critique steadfastly pursued by Adorno proclaims that the rectification of present injustices can only proceed by way of dialectical inversion: if their inmost logic is fully developed theoretically, such injustices can be shown to contain the seeds of their own untruth sowed within themselves. This fact allows them to be convicted of inadequacy on the basis of their own inherent claims to universality and legitimacy. The method of immanent critique, and the moment of dialectical transformation contained therein, knows such phenomena to be ultimately self-dissolving once this process of self-dissolution is activated through the process of dialectical scrutiny. Otherwise they remain refractory and opaque, second natures merely existing "in themselves." By virtue of the fact that such entities can be shown, once dialectically unmasked, intrinsically to posit their own boundary (*Schranke*), they can be shown to contain within themselves the mechanism of their own self-overcoming. In this sense the aims of immanent critique and negative theology dovetail, insofar as the *telos* of the former is a contradiction-free state of *reconciliation (Versöhnung)* — Adorno's secularized recasting of the Benjaminian category of *redemption (Erlösung)*.

Richard Wolin

Wayne Hudson, *The Marxist Philosophy of Ernst Bloch*, (St. Martin's Press: New York, 1982) 289 pages.

Perhaps the time has finally arrived for a fuller appreciation of Ernst Bloch, the eminent Marxist philosopher of the "not-yet." At the very least, Wayne Hudson's book will make Bloch's ideas better-known in America, and known in a manner that Bloch himself would have approved. Hudson's incisive and cogent study gives readers an inkling of the diverse and provocative Blochian theories that are there for us to "inherit," if we can learn to sift the gems of light from the poetical and somewhat esoteric philosopher's pen. Given Bloch's voluminous output and the incredible demands he places on his readers, Hudson's work illuminates a way into and beyond Bloch's ideas. It points to future discoveries which we have not yet made but are certainly worth the attempt.

Hudson's finely written book is divided into six chapters. The first, "Incipit Vita Nova," is a short presentation of Bloch's life and development as a philosopher. The

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second discusses Bloch's particular conception of utopia in regard to Marxist thought. Chapters three and four explain the categories in Bloch's open system of Marxist metaphysics. The fifth explores Bloch's endeavors to revise or fill in the gaps of orthodox Marxism. The final chapter summarizes Bloch's achievements in a critical vein. Throughout his study, Hudson does not shy away from confronting the problematic aspects of Bloch's contribution to Marxist philosophy. In fact, it is his candid and critical approach to Bloch which sets the groundwork for a full appreciation of the German philosopher of hope. Since Bloch was and still is a controversial Marxist, the value of Hudson's work lies in the manner in which he engages in the controversies surrounding Bloch and clarifies the purpose of Bloch's political philosophy.

From the beginning, Hudson endeavors to elaborate an answer to the thorny question about how one goes about characterizing Bloch. He points out that "even thoughtful readers have concluded that Bloch is: 1) a notoriously unsystematic poetic thinker, best understood through his literary works; 2) a Marxist philosopher of man, who restores an anthropological, voluntaristic perspective to Marxism; 3) a Marxist philosopher of hope, of utopia, of the future; 4) a Marxist mystic; 5) a Marxist Messianist, Thomas Münzer redivivus: an atheist theologian who unites the moral fervor of an Old Testament prophet with the utopian eschatology of chiliasm; 6) a Marxist Schelling, an anachronistic neo-Romantic who combines a form of identity metaphysics with a materialist world soul." (p. 1) Hudson demonstrates that there is some truth to all these descriptions, but they ultimately miss the mark because they fail to grasp that the unfinished, opaque nature of Bloch's work was part of a conscious design which evolved early in his life.

Bloch was a precocious thinker who began corresponding with such remarkable philosophers as Theodor Lipps, Wilhelm Mundt, Eduard von Hartmann, Wilhelm Windelband, and Ernst Mach while he was still in his teens. He was profoundly influenced by German idealist thought of the 19th century and the leading psychologists and epistemologists of the early 20th century, Freud, Scheler, Husserl, and Külpe. He had also read Marx and taken an interest in the Kabbala and Jewish mysticism. In 1907, by the time he was 22, he wrote an essay entitled *Über die Kategorie Noch-Nicht* (On the Category of Not-Yet), which Hudson considers the "one fundamental idea important enough to set him apart from other thinkers...the idea that man possessed an anticipatory consciousness which gave him not-yet-conscious knowledge of future possibilities" (p. 6). By the time Bloch published his first major work, *Geist der Utopie* (Spirit of Utopia), in 1918 his basic messianic and utopian ideas had been determined, and he had also developed his unique, expressionist style of writing. From 1919 until his death in 1977 at the ripe old age of 92, Bloch essentially grafted Marxist tenets onto his early phenomenological position and refined his syncretic metaphysics in light of the political developments of his time. Though not an activist, Bloch actively responded to the political conflicts and altered his ideas as he experienced the rise of fascism in Germany (1919-1933), the endeavors to oppose fascism while in European exile (1933-1938), the technological capitalism of America (1938-1948), the growing totalitarian repression of East Germany (1948-1961), and the repressive tolerance of Western Germany (1961-1977). In each one of the phases of Bloch's mature life, he fought continual battles on two fronts: against bourgeois ideology, which he partially appropriated, and against orthodox Marxism, which he partially defended. It was from this barely tenable position that he cultivated his unique political philosophy, which needs more exploration in English-speaking countries because he dared to tread and gaze where many Marxists have feared to move and investigate.

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Hudson rightly points out that by 1923 "Bloch was convinced that there could be no way forward without Marx, but that Marxism needed to be supplemented with a metafactual, utopian perspective." (p. 33). Thus, it is primarily by viewing Bloch as a Marxist utopian, who fought on two fronts simultaneously, that we can grasp the essence of his key categories. The significance of Hudson's book lies in the lucid manner in which he presents the origins of Bloch's thought and explains the possibilities which Bloch's categories may have for us in present-day cultural debates. Here I want to focus on Hudson's elaboration of the key categories of *utopia, non-contemporaneity, novum,* and *cultural heritage* to demonstrate how carefully Hudson works to conceive a picture of Bloch as the Marxist philosopher of hope, who opens up possibilities for thinking and action which we have yet to realize.

Early in the first chapter, Hudson sums up Bloch's worldview, which was to stamp all his philosophical categories and particularly that of utopia. "He argued for a greater representation of the world in philosophy, and emphasized the limits of human rationalisms. The world was not at hand as something given, finished and solved, which fell neatly into human concepts without a remainder. It was temporal and in process: essentially unfinished, unsolved, objectively problematic. Hence, it could not be ontologized on the basis of appearance or current predicates which had not been thought through to the end. The world at hand was essentially modal, and a true rationalism had to be based on knowledge of what it could become. Appearance was not yet essence, and existence itself stood in the relation of an objective genitive to creative thought." (p. 22). Given the unfinished nature of the world, Bloch believed that there was a task set for human beings, a kind of Kantian categorial imperative, to complete what they anticipated in the darkness of the lived moment. It is because we are too close to what we live (*leben*) that we cannot know it and thus must move beyond ourselves to experience (*erleben*) the anticipated, which is a form of community, of the "we." The struggle to realize the anticipated does not mean that utopia is beyond us. This is where Bloch differed from orthodox Marxism, which has generally depicted utopia rationally as the logical outcome of class struggle in the form of communism. As Hudson points out, "Bloch locates utopia in regard to the present and the future via his operator 'not yet.' Utopia is 'now,' in the sense that the intensive content which men search for under the name of utopia is present in the lived moment... Utopia, however, is also 'not yet' in at least three senses. It is 'not yet' in the sense that it has never come to be and functions normatively against the inadequate which has become actual... Utopia is also 'not yet' in the sense that it is something which men have envisaged in different forms through the centuries... Finally, utopia is 'not yet' in the sense that it is still not fully possible and looks ahead to new contents and developments beyond the limitations of the present world" (p. 54).

Given Bloch's emphasis on utopia, he saw the task of Marxism as that of the midwife of political praxis: Marxist theory is to enable humankind to discover the preappearance (*Vorschein*) of utopia in cultural artifacts which need cultivation to bring about the eventual Messianic realization of true utopia. The Marxist project demands the investigation of all traces (*Spuren*) of utopian elements and moments. Yet the discoveries are not to be presented as definitive. They are to be revealed in a poetical, provocative, and radically new way so that readers will be challenged to work through the anticipated message and come to their own conclusions. Obviously, as Hudson is quick to comment, Bloch's utopian message and expressionist style have been open to the charge of opaqueness. Bloch is eclectic in his use of Marxist theory and fails to provide sociological mediations in his analyses of culture and the ontological process.

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Nevertheless, it is the *suggestive* quality of Bloch's writings, his unique approach to Marxism and classical philosophy, which often provides insight if not foresight into the nature of socio-political developments.

His notion of non-contemporaneity (*Ungleichzeitigkeit*), which forms the basis of his book *Erbschaft dieser Zeit* (Heritage of Our Time), is a good example. In contrast to the orthodox Marxist analyses of fascism, which were abstract and rhetorical, Bloch intended in the early 1930s to explore all types of cultural phenomena which influenced the political consciousness of different sectors of the German population. Even if the major contemporaneous contradiction was that between the proletariat and the bourgeoisie, it did not mean that all parts of the bourgeoisie and the peasantry responded to events in a mechanical class manner. So Bloch studied the non-contemporaneous contradictions which accounted for the unwillingness of peasants and office workers to move with the times. He attributed a great deal of importance to older modes of production and *Volk* rituals which could not be dashed aside by communist slogans and demands for class solidarity. As Hudson maintains, "Bloch's achievement was to replace crude paper models of class structure with differentiations and an analysis of the discontinuities in and between different classes, to allow for genuine regional differences, and for the effectivity of the perceptions and aspirations of different strata" (p. 43).

While focusing on the failings of the socialist and communist movements to grasp the non-contemporaneous strands in German society, Bloch was also concerned with shedding light on the *novum,* which could possibly attract the attention of people irrespective of their class. As he often did, Bloch reutilized a Biblical concept for his purposes in the sense of *Umfunktionierung.* Here it is that of the eschatological new which as *novum* is used to designate the radical new that has never yet been. Bloch was convinced that matter itself, the world as totality, had a disposition to a "genuine future" indicated by the *novum* which is a qualitative and substantive leap forward. The *novum* does not emerge automatically from the world process itself. Rather, it must be grasped through theory-praxis and cultivated to bring about the final *novum.* Since the *novum* is never entirely new, its emergence and fulfillment depend ultimately on the efforts of humankind to uncover the traces of the *novum* in pre-appearances as they take shape privately in daydreams or publicly in cultural artifacts. The quality of a society or civilization is measured by the degree to which it seizes the pre-appearances of the *novum* and utilizes them in daily practice.

Here the category of cultural heritage (*Kulturerbe*) plays an integral role in Bloch's philosophy. Though Hudson never explores this concept at length, he often refers to Bloch's notion of inheritance or inheriting which is not an indication of passivity. Hudson maintains that Bloch pioneered "a praxis-oriented, activist approach to aesthetics, which seeks to refunction the cultural materials which emerge in the process, and to activate their constitutive potential for the determination of the teleological content of socialism" (p. 180). Here it is significant to distinguish Bloch's notion of cultural heritage from that of the German Democratic Republic, where he resided for thirteen years — a distinction which he himself made. Unlike the East German state, which uses the concept of cultural heritage to legitimize its role as the true heir to the German socialist tradition (i.e., the state of the German Democratic Republic is allegedly the logical outcome of long years of class struggle and is also the guardian of the humanist tradition of the German people) Bloch argued that this category could not depend on the state. In fact, just as he asserted that an active Marxist inheritance of religion would involve the end of religion, so he insisted that an active Marxist inheritance of culture

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would mean an end to all ideology and the state. To inherit meant for Bloch to learn to walk upright (*der aufrechte Gang*), to exercise one's natural right to realize one's capacities and satisfy one's needs. The state is not to dictate how to inherit and what is decadent or progressive. The state is to assist individuals to move from the "I" to the "we" in a communal effort to establish the final *novum*. The pre-appearances in all matter and cultural artifacts are to be gleaned by communities to strengthen the visibility of the goal and the will to concretize the utopian tendencies and latencies in human nature and the natural environment.

By focusing on the categories of utopia, non-contemporaneity, *novum*, and cultural heritage as explained by Hudson, it is possible to form a fairly accurate picture of Bloch's significance and purpose as utopian Marxist philosopher. And it is also possible to locate his weaknesses. One of the strengths of Hudson's book is that he takes pains in each chapter to outline the valid criticisms of Bloch's work. According to Hudson, Bloch can be faulted on a number of grounds: "he collapses the critical edge of Marx's analyses and replaces it with an over-rhetorical, aestheticist discourse; . . . he makes no significant contribution to the analysis of the development of capitalism during its greatest period of innovation and expansion, and makes the formation of scientific concepts almost impossible by a conflation of phenomenological appearance with underlying law; . . . he confuses Marxism with speculative humanism" (p. 210). Though there is some truth to these charges, it is Bloch's very heretical standpoint as Marxist which endows his work with lasting value. Perhaps his major achievement, as Hudson points out, is that he reveals the "need for a pathology of Marxism which relates its mixture of bad utopianism and sterile objectivism to an historical and social conditioning which does not cease to operate because Marxists believe they have broken with 'bourgeois ideology' and capitalism. In this sense, Bloch's work suggests that a post-capitalist Marxism is both needed, and more difficult to achieve than Marxists have hitherto imagined" (p. 214). Certainly, whatever one may conclude about Bloch's achievement, Hudson's study goes a long way toward making Bloch understandable and vital for our time.

Jack Zipes

Steven M. Tipton, *Getting Saved from the Sixties, Moral Meaning in Conversion and Cultural Change*, Forward by Robert N. Bellah (University of California Press: Berkeley, 1982) 364 pages.

Value free no longer, the bones of positivism are trampled by scientists who proclaim crisis, envision spiritual awakenings, and search for new faiths. Statistics line up alongside poetry and diagrams of meditation postures, as if the errors of theoretical neutrality might be corrected by a confessional style in which the investigator's own lost faith sets the context of inquiry. Nowhere is the zest for the apocalyptic so evident as in the study of the new religions that have sprung up over the last two decades, groups dubbed by some sociologists as the "successor movements to the sixties." With few exceptions, their evaluations are positive, ranging from the tolerant — "a natural

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response to the anomie of late capitalism" — to the enthused — "new myths for a new age." This benign attitude — in sharp contrast to the popular image of cults as coercive — is generated in part by the sociologist's habit of relating the religious movements to the perceived failures of the politics and counterculture of the sixties. So-called holistic concerns with meaning are judged superior to drugs and bombs, the supposed essence of the counterculture. With such a narrative, science confirms the cynicism of the eighties about the futility of public life. Thus, the science of ideology becomes ideology, and as far as ideologies go, crude positivism may be less harmful.

Getting Saved from the Sixties by Steven Tipton should be read on these three levels: 1) the values offered by three alternative religious movements (ARM) to a spiritually exhausted mainstream culture, 2) their relation to past youth movements and to future social morality, and 3) the assumptions that undergird this type of sociology. From interviews and participation in EST, Pacific Zen Center and a born again revival church, Tipton observes that ARM provide the moral structure needed to function in an overwhelmingly utilitarian culture without sacrificing the expressive ethic of the sixties. "Disoriented by drugs, embittered by politics, disillusioned by the apparent worthlessness of work and the transiency of love, they have found a way back through these movements, a way to cope with the demands of their own maturing lives" (p. 30). In short, these groups *integrate*: counterculture with culture, personalist with utilitarian, youth with adult. The resulting synthesis meets the individual's need for order while embodying a new morality for post-modern society. The revolution is cancelled, but this infiltration of moral consciousness will goad society to change without damaging the psyche.

Like post-Freudian psychology, these conclusions are remarkable for the celebration of conventional wisdom under the cloak of science. A therapeutic sociology for a therapeutic age. "People can't change society; they can only change themselves." The New Left is remembered for its violence and not for its role in ending the war. Serial relationships carried on by hippies spell instability, while an EST graduate's ability to move in and out of "contracts" is a mark of flexibility. One spoke naively of love; the other calculates game plans and posits the perfection of self and system. In this way, politics is forgotten, while psychology fuses with religion to create new liturgies for late capitalism: Harmony; Wholeness; Health; Unity; Rules; and Order. Negativity is drained off so thoroughly that the language and consciousness of conflict vanishes. With the wisdom of Yoda, these myths assure us that, if we confess publicly, meditate, or identify with society's rules, the Force lies within us. The monistic conviction that "I am the cause of all that occurs in my life" is only plausible to those who have so little actual power that the belief never could be tested, and enough narcissism to accept it anyway. In essence, mysticism may be the moral buttress of the totally administered society, a Zen ethic to replace the Protestant one. "Alternative religions uphold deontological or contractual ethics that discriminate practically between right and wrong conduct in various kinds of relationships. Their members behave more reliably in specific roles than hippies ever did. They pay their creditors, satisfy their employers, keep their personal promises, and make their business appointments. In short, they fit in better as functionally related components of a complex society, but they do so more by virtue of their ethical convictions than their technical skills" (p. 240). An exotic path to pacification gives the illusion of change, but the end-product will probably gratify Wall Street.

After cataloguing these accommodations, it is surprising to find Tipton regarding ARM as models for future society, or at least a seedbeds for new consciousness. To

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explain such wishfulness, we look behind him to his mentor, Robert Bellah. To a great degree, the text seeks empirical verification for Bellah's notion of the role of civil religion in American history. Bellah, in turn, echoes the views of Parsons, which are summarized by Gouldner in *The Coming Crisis of Western Sociology*. "For Talcott Parsons the social world is, above all, a moral world, and social reality is a moral reality...This conjunction (moral and religious interests)...culminates in Parsons' work...Parsons has looked upon the world and upon the whole history of European civilization and contemporary society; he finds it not only powerful but good, its power and goodness largely deriving from a Christianity that still retains an abiding vitality. Christianity, for Parsons, has been the central source of the order, the unity, and the progress of Western society. About the only modern developments of significance that Parsons fails to attribute to Christianity are Marxism and socialism." (pp. 246, 254, 256) After burying the "single factor" heresies of Marxism, the structural functionalists adopt a differentiated view of culture that places religion and morality at the center. Not only is morality a functional imperative, it signifies a pious force that checks the Molochs of modern life — utilitarianism, capitalism, empiricism. Without a shared system of values (that is, religion) neither individuals nor society can legitimate their activities or achieve equilibrium.

The accommodation between cult and culture mirrors the accommodation within the categories of structural functionalism. Religion facilitates the adaptation of the individual to the environment by providing a sense of order. This notion of a universal structure results from the collapse of religion into morality and morality into homeostasis, thereby neutralizing the impact of each. Such structures are blank walls on which any particular content might appear so long as it supports the house. Categories so abstract permit no differentiation among types of order, forms of religion, experience, and values. Once religion is identified with "meaningfulness-in-general," all possibility of distinguishing its humane from its nonhumane forms dies.

The reactionary character of these foundations follows Tipton throughout the analysis. He injects some movement into the plain functionalist account by focusing on social change, but otherwise the scenario remains the same. If moral values form the core of social solidarity, and morality is shaped by civil religion, then if follows that new religions will humanize old social practices. The script which casts ARM as a vanguard party is summarized by Bellah in *The Broken Covenant*. "Culture is the key to revolution; religion is the key to culture. If we win the political struggle, we will not even know what we want unless we have a new vision of man, a new sense of human possibility, and a new conception of the ordering of liberty, the constitution of freedom. Without that, political victory, even were it attainable, could have no lasting result." (p. 162)

Out of a therapeutic culture arises its intellectual counterpart, an uncritical hermeneutic. The isolation of moral culture from society parallels the elevation of discourse above the rest of individual experience. Puzzled by the complexity of actual relations, the scientist picks out an understandable fragment that is then made to stand for the whole. In this case, Tipton characterizes the moral lifestyles of the ARM by listening to their discourse about values. He is careful to interview current converts and states as his premise that "I will take what people say about how they see, judge, and make sense of their lives as raw evidence for the way they make and change their culture." (p. xiv) In place of doubt, the scholar classifies discourse according to ethical distinctions churned out by analytic philosophers, as, for example, in rule vs. act utilitarianism. It's a pity that Tipton did not turn to such sources as Kierkegaard or Hegel on topics of moral self-deception, the madness and violence implicit in ideals of

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purity and perfection. But that level of thinking does not occur here. The sociologist is fixed firm on the "plains of common sense," removed from insoluble contradictions on either the social or individual sides.

Given his role as scribe, the sociologist can snipe at the counterculture in line with the interviews. The literalness which heaps praise upon the ARM views the sixties in the person of the "drug-soaked hippie." Besides drugs, the resulting portrait emphasizes the promiscuous, anti-intellectual, judgmental, impulsive behavior — that "endless odyssey of emotions" that left them dysfunctional. At times, Tipton's bitterness at the romanticism of revolt moves beyond transcription. While defending the traditional woman's role in the Christian revival church he states: "The Living Word Fellowship" stresses mastery of such household skills as cooking, sewing, and child care, and it calls for industry in their exercise. This differs sharply from the counterculture's ideal of a "free and natural woman," blue-jeaned and braless, who in fact lacked the job skills and education needed to make her own way in the world of work." (p. 77).

These memories of the sixties are flawed by the self-selection process which insures bitterness. By using ARM for the retrospective, we choose those who later gravitated to the service of an all-encompassing moral regimen. A less extreme view would be reconstructed from the memories of social workers, teachers, organizers, writers. As given in the name of science, these reminiscences foster the futility presently felt about the possibility of protest or mass action. Again we hear the sixties were a failure.

This analysis of failure carries through the themes raised earlier by Bellah. In *The Broken Covenant*, (1971), Bellah traces civil religion through American history as the counterweight to utilitarian self-interest. The tension between these loyalities set the ground rules for public order until recent events, primarily the Vietnam War, ripped apart the alliance. For Bellah, the sixties signified a religious crisis, the third great social rupture, after the Revolution and Civil War. As in the earlier crises, the nation stood in need of a "Great Religious Awakening" to infuse the transcendent back into national life and prevent a possible "global suicide." Unlike earlier crises, that of the sixties suggested that traditional Judeo-Chistianity alone could not provide legitimation. Religious institutions, symbols, and leaders looked so thoroughly like servants of the status quo that their "oppositional function" ceased. With what now looks like premature alarm, Bellah gauged the disillusionment too great to respond to conventional spirituality. "It is precisely the significance of that decade that the irrationality and horror of modern history were seriously borne in upon Americans — so seriously that for the first time mass disaffection from the common understandings of American culture and society began to occur...The limits were pushed far beyond what any previous great awakening had seen: toward socialism in one direction, toward mysticism in the other" (*Varieties of Civil Religion*, pp. 168-169, and p. 176). This sacred history of the U.S. lays the ground for Tipton's analysis. Like the bands of Christians in the Roman empire, ARM are expected to break apart American culture from within its fissures.

Millennial religion has clearly rubbed off on sociology. The scientist, like the believer, uses the language of the end times. A legitimation crisis is proclaimed, so Tipton, Bellah, and others anticipate a new awakening. They slip from description to sweeping explanations set against the panorama of American history. Eagerness to escape the pessimism of the present leads to uncritical solutions for the future. Does mysticism signify emancipation or a more successful adaptation to actual powerlessness? Is the postulate of individual perfection any more than defense against despair?

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How do the movements of anti-modernism shore up the given social order with more resilient psyches?

The blame for not raising these questions lies less with Tipton and more with the sociological tradition. The inquiry is at once too general and too specific. Too general, because such abstractions as "religion," "integrative function," and "bureaucracy" assume an ahistorical status that wipes out differences and submerges conflict. "Capitalism-empiricism-utility" is the hydra in the background that is assumed rather than explored. Though Tipton acknowledges stratification through a choice of cults that represents different economic classes, in the end, the three groups collaborate in a common moral project. Too specific, because the interview format leads the sociologist away from a critical examination of the doctrines. He collates viewpoints but does not question content, except through asides which let us know that Tipton personally has reservations about EST. Positivism has not really been abandoned when social science allows for personal confession and uses non-sexist language to reflect the world as it is given. The self-critique of science must go further.

The emancipatory value of the ARM will not be decided without an internal critique of the doctrines. At one point, Bellah is encouraged by the compatibility between mysticism and Marxism. I find this doubtful. Despite negative attitudes toward consumerism, the non-dualistic ontology of Zen, its beliefs in the illusions of suffering and individuality, the elimination of desires and conflict, and the pursuit of perfection lead us away from recognizing the specific irrationality that governs our lives. We are sensitized only to deny the incompletedness that will not disappear. Est, in particular, trains its members in survival skills. Literally, the art of the encyclopedia salesman was reborn as religion. In the members' own words: "Since the training I've realized everybody in a way doesn't care about anybody else. They love you, but their own lives are more important. Everything is sort of a projection of their own image of themselves. And I'm the same way. It's a world of individuals. That's why you've got to live for yourself." (p. 204). "Now that I accept who I am, I can't be had anymore." (p. 207). Or in the words of the local radio therapist: "You are the most important person in the world." Est perfects defensiveness by eliminating guilt, failure, disappointment and leaving you totally responsible for your existence. No forgiveness is needed for an infallible creature who possesses all being. There really *is* no other. At the other end of the scales, the revival church teaches that you are nothing until you submit to its authority and draw your life from God. At both extremes, the world is accepted, neither challenged nor understood. Criticism becomes spiritual disorder, while shell-shocked psyches are patched up for further service.

After reading these accounts of ARM, I am reluctant to trade in our old gods for the new. In the strands of Enlightenment that remain — the non-identity of subject and object, beliefs in rationality, personal dignity, and the community as an interdependence of imperfect subjects in need of the other — may lie our best hope. Before celebrating rules and order, the sociologists should examine their content and never underestimate the system's ability to absorb the "new." What truths must be exchanged for feelings of harmony? The emancipation that must be memorized or wrung out of physical discipline surely expresses more numb resignation than possibility. In the end, the new religions are less akin to the Christians who brought down the empire, and more like the stoics who learned to live in its shadows.

Jeanne Schuler

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Arthur F. McGovern, *Marxism: An American Christian Perspective*, (Maryknoll, New York: Orbis Books, 1981).

Amid his plainly written presentations of Marxism, Christian (predominately Catholic) social teachings, liberation theology and the experience of Christians for socialism in Chile, and the various apparent points of the difference between Christianity and Marxism, Arthur McGovern quietly makes his case for the Christian, even Catholic, orthodoxy of social democracy. Only in the final chapter of the book does McGovern unveil his sympathies for the "economic democracy" of Michael Harrington, dashed with Gramsci's notion of socialist hegemony, Gandhi's stress on building counter institutions during the transition to a new order, and Schumacher's small is beautiful ethos. But all along, McGovern is making straight the way for a democratic socialist answer to the question around which his book is organized: Are Marxism and Christianity compatible?

McGovern's approach to this central issue is expressly non-dialectical; he backs off from any attempt to synthesize Christianity and Marxism. Instead, he employs a sort of Venn diagram method, checking to see what is found in the intersection of Marxism and Christianity and what lies outside it. Though he works with a fairly stable set of elements for Christianity, McGovern investigates a variety of Marxisms: those of Marx, Engels, Lenin, the Soviets, Eurocommunism, and critical Marxism (including Althusser). The historical account of Christian reactions to Marxism given in chapter three provides the standard against which the Marxist views presented in chapters one, two, and four are measured. The actual assessments are found in chapters seven and eight, where the central question is bisected: How can the atheism and materialism of Marxism be brought into line with Christianity? And is there any Christian moral justification for Marxist politics?

For most people, the issue of Christianity's compatibility with Marxism is easily dispatched: Marxism is atheistic materialism, oil to Christianity's water. McGovern sizes up this roadblock this way: "the weight of tradition lies heavy on both Christians and Marxists. But it is historical tradition far more than any inner logic which has linked Marxist atheism and socialism together." (p. 272). Since this is a tradition which goes back to Marx, to make the road passable from Christianity to Marxism, McGovern must defuse Marx's atheism and materialism. McGovern hazards two preliminary attempts at dissociating Marx's atheism from his socialism. First he notices that Marx was an atheist prior to becoming a socialist. From this, he draws the conclusion that Marx's atheism and his socialism are not intrinsically connected. But Marx was also a democrat before becoming a socialist. Is there then no intrinsic connection between democracy and socialism? Second, McGovern stresses that it is the young Marx who writes about atheism; the issue drops out in Marx's later writings. This proves nothing concerning the intrinsic connectedness of Marx's atheism and socialism. With these two unconvincing gestures, McGovern keeps to his non-dialectical method. Rather than explore the religious motifs in Marx's socialism, including in his atheistic attacks on religion, McGovern summons up grounds for excluding atheism from socialism.

Marx's second, "humanistic," critique of religion is borrowed from Feuerbach. Religion is servility to one's own projections. Moreover, Judaism and Christianity are concealed forms of egoism. Thus, in "On the Jewish Question," Marx points to Judaism and Christianity as having prepared the ground for the rampant egoism of capitalist civil society. If Marx is right about this, or if he is right in thinking that any god

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would be a heteronomous invasion of human autonomy, it would be difficult to squeeze out the compatibility of Marxism and Christianity. In response, McGovern assures us that not all Christians do relate to God in a self-debasing manner and that Christianity is not an egoistic doctrine. Perhaps Marx's criticisms are hard to take seriously today.

Under the rubric "Ideological Atheism," McGovern takes up Marx's claims that religion is simply an expression of human misery and that it is an ideology which impedes social change. McGovern's response to the first claim is odd. "Were this line of argument the only grounds for Marx's atheism a rapport with Christianity might certainly be found. Both Christians and Marxists want a truly human society; both groups could concentrate on attaining it. If *then* religion disappears, Marx will have been proved right. It simply did reflect human misery. If religion remains, then Christians can claim that it expresses something much deeper and more positive about human existence." (p. 251). Here McGovern begins by begging the question with regard to the claim that religion impedes progressive social change. He goes on to make the strange assertion that Marxism and Christianity are actually compatible because one side or the other will abandon its position once the truth wills out. To dismiss the view that religion is always reactionary, McGovern turns some of Engels' historical studies against Marx, citing such counter-examples as early Christian communism and the revolutionary Christianity of Thomas Münzer.

McGovern follows most recent Marx scholarship in distinguishing Marx's materialism from the monistic, ontological materialism of Engels and Soviet dialectical materialism. The latter are obviously incompatible with Christianity, but McGovern moves a bit quickly in thinking that the issue is settled once historical materialism has been "de-ontologized." It is obvious that even materialism is compatible with Christianity. Are its immanence and naturalism not in competition with Providence and salvation history?

Marxism without metaphysics is what remains once McGovern has uncoupled socialism from atheism and scientific materialism. The draw of Marxism for McGovern and like-minded Christians is, in fact, not any strident atheism, monistic materialism, bloated claims to being a positive science, or grandiose philosophy of history. What is attractive about Marxism is a socio-economic analysis of capitalist society which provides some structured answers to the questions raised by Christians concerned with injustice, poverty, militarism, the abuse of nature, and the lack of participatory democracy. Thus, some of the leaders in the opening up to Marxism within the U.S. Catholic community have been missionary orders such as the Maryknolls; communities such as the Sisters of Loretto, who have worked in the improverished mining areas of their home state of Kentucky; and associates of the Catholic Worker movement. The kind of Marxist analyses of poverty, underdevelopment, consumerism, military spending, alienated labor, and formal democracy which McGovern packs into his fourth chapter, "The Case against Capitalism," are getting a wider hearing among Christians today, frequently under the title "structural analysis" — a subterfuge in the vein of the Frankfurt School's "critical theory" or Gramsci's "philosophy of praxis." But the adoption of a Marxist perspective on these social and economic issues raises a host of moral difficulties associated with Marxist politics. Before examining McGovern's account, it will pay to follow him through a review of the history of Christian approaches to social issues and to Marxism.

While denunciations of atheism and materialism are the fixed furniture of Christian reactions to Marxism, Christian positions on socio-economic matters have shown

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some change. McGovern focuses on the Papal encyclicals in analyzing these changes. He begins with Pope Pius IX's "Syllabus of Errors," which was appended to his encyclical *Quanta Cura*, and concludes, "If anyone thinks that the Roman Pontiff can and should reconcile himself and come to terms with progress, with liberalism, and with modern civilization, let him be anathema." (Harvey Cox would not have been this Pope's kind of theologian.) This statement, written in the year that the United States was so liberal-minded as to recognize slaves as human beings, may represent a low-water mark in Catholic openness to the modern world, but it was characteristic of much of the Papal social writing to follow in its suspicion of the capitalist ethos — never mind socialism — and its looking homeward to the high times of medieval society. Even the controversial encyclical of Pope Leo XIII, *Rerum Novarum*, from which almost all subsequent social encyclicals are dated, makes its criticisms of the plight of the working class from the perspective of natural law and the economic norms and practices of medieval Europe. Though the encyclical called for Catholic trade unions, it made several criticisms of socialism which have become standard. Pope Leo took socialism to task for: wanting to eradicate private property, being utopian, stimulating class antagonisms, promoting collective control over individuals and the family, and standing for a materialist philosophy of life.

With the following words from his encyclical *Quadragesimo Anno*, Pope Pius XI established himself as the Friedrich Pollock of the Catholic tradition: "Free competition is dead; economic dictatorship has taken its place." Writing in 1930, and still under the sway of the natural law tradition and images of harmonious medieval guild life, the Pope did not share Pollock's sensitivity to the totalitarian possibilities of some of the proposed "alternatives" to monopoly capitalism. Pius promoted "corporatism" as the middle way between liberal-turned-monopolistic capitalism and socialist collectivism. The fate of "corporatism" in the hands of fascist regimes not only silenced Pius' particular proposals, but it burned the bridge back to the Church's medieval home base.

The Second Vatican Council and the papacies of John XXIII and Paul VI gave some important new directions to Catholic social teaching. McGovern stresses the shift in method away from the deductive use of natural law and the normative appeals to the Middle Ages toward a more open and inductive approach that called for reading the "signs of the times." Though Church documents continued to assert a positive connection between private property and the dignity of the individual, increasing emphasis was placed on the social responsibility of property-holders. Pope Paul wrote of unused or poorly used landed estates that "the common good sometimes demands their expropriation." Though Catholic social doctrine was never fully in step with liberal capitalism, Pope Paul was the first to condemn the very system of technocratic capitalism, regretting that "a system had been constructed which considers profit as the key motivation for economic progress, competition as the surpreme law of economics, and private ownership of the means of production as an absolute right that has no limits and carries no corresponding social obligations." (Rev. Falwell would not have been this Pope's kind of theologian.)

Let us turn now to McGovern's treatment of four areas where the moral battles between Christianity and Marxism have been pitched: property, revolutionary violence, class struggle, and dictatorship of the proletariat. If Christianity defends private property above all other considerations and if Marxism demands the total elimination of private property, there is no getting the two together. McGovern attacks this impass from both sides. He reminds Christians that there is a long history of Jewish and Chris-

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tian thought on property, not all of it singing the praises of private property. St. Ambrose, for example, wrote: "Nature has poured forth all things for men for common use. God had ordered all things to be produced, so that there should be food in common to all, and that the earth should be a common possession for all. Nature, therefore, has produced a common right for all, but greed had made it a right for a few."

From the Marxist side, McGovern simply observes that the critique of private property centers on the means of production, not personal effects.

As McGovern rightly observes, Christians have been appalled less by the violence used in attaining power than by the blood shed in consolidating it after the revolution. And in that violence, talk of class struggle and the dictatorship of the proletariat has played a mighty role. McGovern breaks down the problem of violence into two questions: Does Marxist socialism imply violent revolutions? And, where violent overthrow of a regime appears to be the only recourse, can a Christian participate? McGovern's answer to the first question is "no," at least where the democratic countries of the First World are concerned. The second has no simple answer, since pacifist and "just war" traditions compete within Christianity. For the latter, though, there appears to be no inherent objections against Marxist revolutionary violence, except for the difficulties concerning class struggle and dictatorship of the proletariat. McGovern divides the class struggle issue in two: "Class struggle can mean a social reality, the object of the Marxist method of analysis. Class struggle also means a strategy of social change, a means of overcoming class divisions." (p. 293). In the first sense, McGovern sees a just challenge to Christians to recognize the structural nature of social inequities rather than concentrate on transforming individual attitudes. As for the second sense of class struggle, it is hard to see what would rule it out, given widespread Christian support for conflicts between other social groupings, e.g., nations. This leaves the final question: Does Marxist violent class struggle give way to dictatorship or democracy? McGovern relies on studies by Hunt and Draper for the claim that Marx and Engels were democrats. But McGovern places more emphasis on examining the political attitudes held by actual Marxist movements.

By the end of the sixties, the optimism generated by the anti-colonialism of the post-World War II period, the activities of the United Nations, and the new face of the Kennedy administration toward Latin America was spent. The outcry of the poor in the face of ever worsening social and economic conditions is the groundswell whose crest is liberation theology. McGovern anchors his investigation of it on Gustavo Gutierrez's *A Theology of Liberation* (1971). Gutierrez defines liberation theology as "a critical reflection on Christian praxis in the light of the Word." McGovern highlights the *methodological* character of this definition. The praxis-orientation of liberation theology accelerates the movement of the post-Vatican II Church away from deductive natural law theorizing toward the more inductive discernment of the "signs of the times." Praxis gives rise to structural economic and political critiques, such as the renunciation of "development" models, and to ideological critiques of the institutional Church and its theology. Juan Louis Segundo has pursued this "hermeneutic of suspicion" the farthest, challenging the traditional Christian affinity for charity — as opposed to justice — and the conventional, all-too accommodating understandings of God, Eucharist, and spirituality. Christian praxis in the light of the Word reflects back on that Word itself and illuminates such Biblical themes as: God as Liberator (Exodus), God's command to "do Justice," and Jesus' preaching liberation and the Kingdom of God. Finally, this Christian praxis presses the Church to side with the powerless, to consider socialism,

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and to experiment with new institutional forms such as base communities.

Most of the objections voiced against liberation theology from Church circles were invoked by the Chilean hierarchy against the Christians for Socialism (CFS). This group was formed by radical priests who authored the "Declaration of the 80" and whose political views ranged from support for Allende to membership in the left-wing opposition to him. The Chilean bishops based their condemnation of CFS on four judgments: 1) They reduce Christianity to one dimension, namely, politics. Charity, the kingdom, the sacraments, conversion, are all interpreted to refer to classes, parties, or groups. 2) They use the gospel to espouse one particular political option. 3) They reduce all other Christian views to bourgeois ideology. 4) They claim to speak for Christianity and the true Church; they make themselves a church within the Church.

Though sympathetic to the motivations of CFS and to the political exigencies it operated under, McGovern seconds the judgments of the bishops. Indeed, the chief conclusion he draws from the experience of CFS, i.e., the need for a "long march through the institutional Church," bares the strategic import of the cautious and respectful demeanor of McGovern's book: his boots are thick-soled.

Patrick Murray

NOTE ON CONTRIBUTORS

Luciano Parinetto lives and teaches in Milan, Italy. **Richard Van Dülmen** teaches history in the University of Saarlandes in W. Germany. **Robert J. Brym** teaches sociology at the University of Toronto, in Toronto, Canada. **András Kovács** teaches and lives in Budapest, Hungary. **Giuseppe Chiarante** is the editor of *Critica Marxista* in Rome, Italy. **Patrick M. Hughes** lives and teaches in N.Y. City. **George Lipsitz** teaches history at the University of Houston in Texas. **Rudolf J. Siebert** is director of the "Center for Humanistic Future Studies" in Western Michigan University in Kalamazoo, Mi. **José Casanova**, lives and teaches in Jersey City, N.J. **Jean Bethke Elshtain** teaches political science at the University of Mass. in Amherst. **Tim Luke**, teaches political science at Virginia Polytechnic Institute in Blacksburg, Va. **John Hellman** teaches sociology in Trent University in Petersborough, Ontario, Canada. **Arthur F. McGovern** teaches philosophy at the University of Detroit. **Richard Wolin**, teaches history at Reed College in Portland, Or. **Jack Zipes**, teaches German literature at the University of Wisconsin. **Jeanne Schuler** and **Patrick Murray** both teach philosophy at Creighton University in Omaha, Ne. **Russell A. Berman**, teaches German at Stanford University. **Casey Blake** teaches history in Philadelphia, Pa. **Laura Boella** teaches philosophy at the University of Milan, Italy. **Paul Breines**, teaches history in Boston College, in Boston, Mass. **Malina Charwat** lives and works in Los Angeles, Ca. **John A. Coleman** teaches Christian Ethics at the Jesuit School of Theology in Berkeley, Ca. **Harvey Cox** teaches theology at Harvard Theological Seminary. **Charles Davis** teaches in the religion department at Concordia University in Montreal, Canada. **David Gross**, teaches history at the University of Colorado in Boulder, Co. **Joel Kovel**, is a practicing psychoanalyst in New York City. **Jackson Lears** teaches history at the University of Missouri, in Columbia, Mo. **James A. Ogelvy** teaches philosophy at Williams College in Williamstown, Mass. **Robert A. Pois** teaches history at the University of Colorado at Boulder, Co. **Joan Roelofs** teaches political science at Keane College in New Hampshire. **Dorothee Sölle** lives in W. Germany and teaches theology at Union Theological Seminary in New York. **Amedeo Vignorelli** teaches philosophy at the University of Verona, Italy. **Joel Whitebook**, is a practicing psychoanalyst in New York City. **Kurt H. Wolff** teaches sociology at Brandeis University in Boston, Mass.

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